Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/famouswomen0000esth

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

FAMOUS WOMEN

As Described by Famous Writers

EDITED AND TRANSLATED

By ESTHER SINGLETON

AUTHOR OF "TURRETS, TOWERS AND TEMPLES," "GREAT PICTURES," "WONDERS OF NATURE," "ROMANTIC CASTLES AND PALACES," "FAMOUS PAINTINGS," "HISTORIC BUILDINGS," "GOLDEN ROD FAIRY BOOK," "PARIS," "LONDON," "LOVE IN LITERATURE AND ART," "A GUIDE TO THE OPERA," AND TRANSLATOR OF "THE MUSIC DRAMAS OF RICHARD WAGNER"

With Numerous Illustrations

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD & COMPANY
1904

CT
3202
S45

Copyright, 1904,
BY
DODD, MEAD & COMPANY

Published October

Preface

THIS book is a compilation of sketches of famous and beautiful women by well-known authors. The principle of selection in every case has been the political influence exercised by the celebrity, either actively or passively. Few of the most famous reigning sovereigns of the past have naturally been included on account of their masculine cast of mind, or strength of character. Lady Jane Grey was important politically, on the other hand, by being a tool in the hands of ambitious relatives near the throne.

After sovereigns, we come to a class who held power by deputy, as exemplified by Margaret of Parma. Then follows that large and most important class of queens of the left hand, the Maintenons, Pompadours, etc. The women who held sway by intrigue or open exercise of power in the Courts of Charles II., and Louis XIV. and Louis XV. naturally occupy a large place in this book.

The last class of women who have been important in the councils and movements of nations are the more purely intellectual characters and those who plunged into civil strife for the mere love of intrigue, such as the Duchesses de Longueville, de Chevreuse, and du Maine, La Grande Mademoiselle, Madame Roland, etc. The matter I have selected deals chiefly with their activities in politics.

The heroic type of the woman who plunges into active or militant politics is found in Joan of Arc and Agnes Sorel. There are a few cases in which the real monarch has been a puppet in the hands of a strong woman. The type of the latter is shown in Madame des Ursins; and Lady Hamilton and the Duchess of Marlborough also exercised influence over courts, the results of which affected the world's history. Politics affected the tone of many famous *salons,* and women such as Madame Récamier and Lady Blessington, through their acquaintance with ministers and nobles, were politically important in their day. These are also included in this collection.

The limited space of such a volume as this naturally prevents me from giving a full gallery of women of political importance, but I have tried to present as many types as possible.

E. S.

New York, *September,* 1904

You forgot
KENNY PINZI

Contents

PAGE

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS 1
ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

MADAME DE MAINTENON 14
HENRY MORSE STEPHENS.

LOUISE DE QUÉROUALLE, DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH 21
JOHN HENEAGE JESSE.

MARGARET OF PARMA, REGENT OF THE NETHERLANDS 29
WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT.

MARIE DE MANCINI 38
ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF ENGLAND 46
JOHN RICHARD GREEN.

LA MARQUISE DE MONTESPAN 61
ADOLPHE DUPLESSIS.

THE DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND 67
MRS. JAMESON.

MADAME ROLAND 76
ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE.

LADY HAMILTON 84
JOHN PAGET.

LA DUCHESSE DU MAINE 95
CHARLES AUGUSTIN SAINTE-BEUVE.

PAGE

AGNES SOREL 102
W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS.

LADY BLESSINGTON 115
H. BARTON BAKER.

LA DUCHESSE DE CHEVREUSE 124
SUTHERLAND MENZIES.

LADY JANE GREY 133
JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE.

ANNE DE PISSELEU, DUCHESSE D'ESTAMPES . . 144
MADAME BOLLY.

BIANCA CAPELLO 148
ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

MADAME DE POMPADOUR 157
ARSÉNE HOUSSAYE.

BESS OF HARDWICK, COUNTESS OF SHREWSBURY . 167
THOMAS SECCOMBE.

GABRIELLE D'ESTRÉES 173
CHARLES AUGUSTIN SAINTE-BEUVE

ISABELLA OF AUSTRIA 182
CHARLES LOUIS DE SEVELINGES.

CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN 188
JOHN DORAN.

MRS. FITZHERBERT 197
JOHN FYVIE.

HENRIETTE DE BALZAC D'ENTRAGUES . . . 208
LÉON MARLET.

SARAH, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH 214
W. C. TAYLOR.

MADAME DE LONGUEVILLE 222
HIPPOLYTE DE LAPORTE.

PAGE

CATHERINE II., EMPRESS OF RUSSIA 231
HERMAN MERIVALE.

MADAME RÉCAMIER 240
NOEL WILLIAMS.

ELIZABETH CROMWELL CLAYPOLE 248
MARK NOBLE.

ISABELLA D'ESTE 254
JULIA CARTWRIGHT.

LA DUCHESSE DE BERRI 260
A. E. CHALLICE.

JOAN OF ARC 270
CHARLES KNIGHT.

HENRIETTA MARIA, DUCHESS OF ORLEANS . . 282
JOHN HENEAGE JESSE.

DIANE DE POITIERS 287
MADAME BOLLY.

MADAME DES URSINS 292
SUTHERLAND MENZIES.

MADAME DU BARRY 304
ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE.

MARGARET DOUGLAS, COUNTESS OF LENNOX . 308
T. F. HENDERSON.

CATHERINE DE' MEDICI 318
ANNE FORBES BUSH.

CATERINA CORNARO, QUEEN OF CYPRUS . . . 329
DEZOS DE LA ROQUETTE.

ANNE MARIE LOUISE D'ORLÉANS, DUCHESSE DE MONTPENSIER (LA GRANDE MADEMOISELLE) 334
CHARLES DUKE YONGE.

Illustrations

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS . . . . Mytens . . . Frontispiece
Hampton Court Palace.

FACING PAGE

MADAME DE MAINTENON . . . . Mignard 14
Versailles.

DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH . . . . Mignard 22
National Portrait Gallery (London).

MARGARET OF PARMA . . . . . Alonzo Coello 30
The Hermitage.

MARIE DE MANCINI . . . . . Mignard 38
Berlin.

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF ENGLAND . Zucchero 46
Hampton Court Palace.

LA MARQUISE DE MONTESPAN . . Unknown 62
Versailles.

THE DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND . . Lely 68
Hampton Court Palace.

MADAME ROLAND . . . . . Heinsius 76
Versailles.

LADY HAMILTON . . . . . Romney 84
National Portrait Gallery (London).

LA DUCHESSE DU MAINE 96
Versailles.

AGNES SOREL . . . . . Fouquet 102
Antwerp.

LADY BLESSINGTON . . . . . Lawrence 116
Wallace Collection (London).

LA DUCHESSE DE CHEVREUSE 124

LADY JANE GREY . . . . . Lucas de Heere 134
National Portrait Gallery (London).

ANNE DE PISSELEU . . . . . School of François Clouet 144
Dresden.

BIANCA CAPELLO . . . . . Bronzino 148
Pitti (Florence).

FACING PAGE

MADAME DE POMPADOUR . . . . Boucher 158
National Portrait Gallery (Edinburgh).

BESS OF HARDWICK . . . . . Janssen 168
National Portrait Gallery (London).

GABRIELLE D'ESTRÉES 174

ISABELLA OF AUSTRIA . . . . . Van Dyck 182
Belvedere (Vienna).

CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN 188
Versailles.

MRS. FITZHERBERT . . . . . Romney 198
National Portrait Gallery (London).

HENRIETTE DE BALZAC D'ENTRAGUES 208

SARAH, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH . Kneller 214
National Portrait Gallery (London).

MADAME DE LONGUEVILLE . . . . Unknown 222
Chantilly.

CATHERINE II., EMPRESS OF RUSSIA 232

MADAME RÉCAMIER . . . . . David 240
Louvre.

ELIZABETH CROMWELL CLAYPOLE . J. M. Wright 248
National Portrait Gallery (London).

ISABELLA D'ESTE . . . . . Titian 254
Belvedere (Vienna).

LA DUCHESSE DE BERRI . . . . . Lawrence 260

JOAN OF ARC . . . . . Ingres 270
Louvre.

DUCHESS OF ORLEANS . . . . . Mignard 282
National Portrait Gallery (London).

DIANE DE POITIERS 288

MADAME DES URSINS 292
Versailles.

MADAME DU BARRY . . . . . Unknown 304
Versailles.

COUNTESS OF LENNOX . . . . . Unknown 308
National Portrait Gallery (London).

CATHERINE DE' MEDICI . . . . . Unknown 318
Louvre.

CATERINA CORNARO . . . . . Titian 330
Uffizi (Florence).

LA GRANDE MADEMOISELLE 334

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS

(1542—1587)

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, daughter of King James V. and his wife, Mary of Lorraine, was born in December, 1542, a few days before the death of her father, heart-broken by the disgrace of his arms at Solway Moss, where the disaffected nobles had declined to encounter an enemy of inferior force in the cause of a king whose systematic policy had been directed against the privileges of their order, and whose representative on the occasion was an unpopular favourite appointed general in defiance of their ill-will. On September 9, following, the ceremony of coronation was duly performed upon the infant. A scheme for her betrothal to Edward, Prince of Wales, was defeated by the grasping greed of his father, whose obvious ambition to annex the Crown of Scotland at once to that of England aroused instantly the general suspicion and indignation of Scottish patriotism. In 1548, the Queen of six years old was betrothed to the Dauphin Francis, and set sail for France, where she arrived on August 15. The society in which the child was reared is known to readers of Brantôme as well as that of imperial Rome at its worst is known to readers of Suetonius or Petronius,—as well as that of Papal Rome at its worst to

readers of the diary kept by the domestic chaplain of Pope Alexander VI. Only in their pages can a parallel be found to the gay and easy record which reveals without sign of shame or suspicion of offence the daily life of a court compared to which the Court of King Charles II. is as the Court of Queen Victoria to the society discribed by Grammont. Debauchery of all kinds and murder in all forms were the daily subjects of excitement or of jest to the brilliant circle which revolved around Queen Catherine de' Medici. After ten years' training under the tutelage of the woman whose main instrument of policy was the corruption of her own children, the Queen of Scots, aged fifteen years and five months, was married to the eldest and feeblest of the brood on April 24, 1558. On November 17, Elizabeth became Queen of England, and the Princes Lorraine—Francis the great Duke of Guise and his brother the Cardinal—induced their niece and her husband to assume, in addition to the arms of France and Scotland, the arms of a country over which they asserted the right of Mary Stuart to reign as legitimate heiress of Mary Tudor. Civil strife broke out in Scotland between John Knox and the Queen-Dowager—between the self-styled "congregation of the Lord" and the adherents of the Regent, whose French troops repelled the combined forces of the Scotch and their English allies from the beleaguered walls of Leith, little more than a month before the death of their mistress in the Castle of Edinburgh, on June 10, 1560. On August 25, Protestantism was proclaimed and Catholicism suppressed in Scotland by a convention of states assembled without the assent of the absent Queen. On December 5,

Francis II. died; in August, 1561, his widow left France for Scotland, having been refused a safe conduct by Elizabeth on the ground of her own previous refusal to ratify the treaty made with England by her commissioners in the same month of the preceding year. She arrived nevertheless in safety in Leith, escorted by three of her uncles of the house of Lorraine, and bringing in her train her future biographer, Brantôme, and Chastelard, the first of all her voluntary victims. On August 21, she first met the only man able to withstand her; and their first passage of arms left, as he recorded, upon the mind of John Knox an ineffable impression of her "proud mind, crafty wit, and indurate heart against God and his truth." And yet her acts of concession and conciliation were such as no fanatic on the opposite side could have approved. She assented, not only to the undisturbed maintenance of the new creed, but even to a scheme for the endowment of the Protestant ministry out of the confiscated lands of the Church.

Her first step was unconsciously taken on the road to Fotheringay, when she gave her heart at first sight to her kinsman Henry, Lord Darnley, son of Matthew Stuart, Earl of Lennox, who had suffered an exile of twenty years in expiation of his intrigues with England, and had married the niece of King Henry VIII., daughter of his sister Margaret, the widow of James IV., by her second husband, the Earl of Angus. Queen Elizabeth, with the almost incredible want of tact or instinctive delicacy which distinguished and disfigured her vigorous intelligence, had recently proposed as a suitor to the Queen of Scots her own low-

born favourite, Lord Robert Dudley, the widower, if not the murderer, of Amy Robsart; and she now protested against the project of marriage between Mary and Darnley. Mary, who had already married her kinsman in secret at Stirling Castle with Catholic rites celebrated in the apartment of David Rizzio, her secretary for correspondence with France, assured the English ambassador, in reply to the protest of his mistress, that the marriage would not take place for three months, when a dispensation from the Pope would allow the cousins to be publicly united without offence to the Church. On July 29, 1565, they were accordingly remarried at Holyrood. The hapless and worthless bridegroom had already incurred the hatred of two powerful enemies, the Earls of Morton and Glencairn; but the former of these took part with the Queen against the forces raised by Murray, Glencairn, and others, under the nominal leadership of Hamilton, Duke of Chatelheraut, on the double plea of danger to the new religion of the country, and of the illegal proceeding by which Darnley had been proclaimed King of Scots, without the needful constitutional assent of the estates of the realm. Murray was cited to attend the "raid," or array, levied by the King and Queen, and was duly denounced by public blast of trumpet for his non-appearance. He entered Edinburgh with his forces, but failed to hold the town against the guns of the castle, and fell back upon Dumfries before the advance of the royal army, which was now joined by James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, on his return from a three years' outlawed exile in France.

Darnley at once threw himself into the arms of the party

opposed to the policy of the Queen and her secretary—a policy which at that moment was doubly and trebly calculated to exasperate the fears of the religious and the pride of the patriotic. Mary was invited, if not induced, by the King of Spain to join his league for the suppression of Protestantism; while the actual or prospective endowment of Rizzio with Morton's office of chancellor, and the projected attainder of Murray and his allies, combined to inflame at once the anger and the apprehension of the Protestant nobles. On March 9, the palace of Holyrood was invested by a troop under the command of Morton, while Rizzio was dragged by force out of the Queen's presence and slain without trial in the heat of the moment.

The favour shown to Bothwell had not yet given occasion for scandal, though his character as an adventurous libertine was as notable as his reputation for military hardihood; but as the summer advanced his insolence increased with his influence at Court and the general aversion of his rivals. He was richly endowed by Mary from the greater and lesser spoils of the Church; and the three wardenships of the border, united for the first time in his person, gave the Lord High Admiral of Scotland a position of unequalled power. In the gallant discharge of its duties he was dangerously wounded by a leading outlaw, whom he slew in single combat; and while yet confined to Hermitage Castle he received a visit of two hours from the Queen, who rode thither from Jedburgh and back through twenty miles of the wild borderland, where her person was in perpetual danger from the freebooters whom her father's policy had striven and had failed to

extirpate. The result of this daring ride was a ten days' fever, after which she removed by short stages to Craigmillar, where a proposal for her divorce from Darnley was laid before her by Bothwell, Murray, Huntley, Argyle, and Lethington, who was chosen spokesman for the rest.

On the evening of Sunday, February 9, Mary took her last leave of the miserable boy who had so often and so mortally outraged her as Consort and Queen. That night the whole city (Glasgow) was shaken out of sleep by an explosion of gunpowder which shattered to fragments the building in which he should have slept and perished; and next morning the bodies of Darnley and a page were found strangled in a garden adjoining it, whither they had apparently escaped over a wall to be despatched by the hands of Bothwell's attendant confederates.

Upon the view which may be taken of Mary's conduct during the next three months depends the whole debatable question of her character. According to the professed champions of that character, this conduct was a tissue of such dastardly imbecility, such heartless irresolution, and such brainless inconsistency, as forever to dispose of her time-honoured claim to the credit of intelligence and courage. It is certain that just three months and six days after the murder of her husband, she became the wife of her husband's murderer.

In 1581, Mary accepted the advice of Catherine de' Medici and Henry III. that she should allow her son's title to reign as King of Scotland conjointly with herself when released and restored to a share of the throne. This plan was but part of

a scheme including the invasion of England by her kinsman, the Duke of Guise, who was to land in the north and raise a Scottish army to place the released prisoner of Sheffield beside her son on the throne of Elizabeth. After the overthrow of the Scottish accomplices in this notable project, Mary poured forth upon Elizabeth a torrent of pathetic and eloquent reproach for the many wrongs she had suffered at the hands of her hostess, and pledged her honour to the assurance that she now aspired to no kingdom but that of heaven. In the autumn of 1584, she was removed to Wingfield Manor, under charge of Sir Ralph Sadler and John Somers, who accompanied her also on her next removal to Tutbury in January, 1585. In April, 1585, Sir Amyas Paulet was appointed to the office of which Sadler, accused of careless indulgence, had requested to be relieved; and on Christmas Eve she was removed from the hateful shelter of Tutbury to the Castle of Chartley in the same county. Her correspondence in cypher from thence with her English agents abroad, intercepted by Walsingham and deciphered by his secretary, gave eager encouragement to the design for a Spanish invasion of England under the Prince of Parma—an enterprise in which she would do her utmost to make her son take part, and in case of his refusal would induce the Catholic nobles of Scotland to betray him into the hands of Philip, from whose ntelage he should be released only on her demand, or if after er death he should wish to return, nor then unless he had ecome a Catholic. But even these patriotic and maternal chemes to consign her child and reconsign the Kingdom to ne keeping of the Inquisition, incarnate in the widower of

Mary Tudor, were superseded by the attraction of a conspiracy against the throne and life of Elizabeth. In August the conspirators were netted, and Mary was arrested at the gate of Tixall Park, whither Paulet had taken her under pretence of a hunting party. On September 25, she was removed to the strong castle of Fotheringay in Northamptonshire. On October 6, she was desired by letter from Elizabeth to answer the charges brought against her before certain of the chief English nobles appointed to sit in commission on the cause.

On October 14 and 15, 1586, the trial was held in the hall of Fotheringay Castle. Alone, "without one counseller on her side among so many," Mary conducted the whole of her own defence with courage incomparable and unsurpassable ability. Pathos and indignation, subtlety and simplicity, personal appeal and political reasoning, were the alternate weapons with which she fought against all odds of evidence or inference, and disputed step by step every inch of disputable ground. She repeatedly insisted on the production of proof in her own handwriting as to her complicity with the project of the assassins who had expiated their crime on the 20th and 21st of the month preceding. When the charge was shifted to the question of her intrigues with Spain, she took her stand resolutely on her right to convey whatever right she possessed, though now no kingdom was left her for disposal, to whomsoever she might choose. One single slip she made in the whole course of her defence; but none could have been more unluckily characteristic and significant. When Burghley brought against her the unanswerable charge

of having at that moment in her service, and in receipt of an annual pension, the instigator of a previous attempt on the life of Elizabeth, she had the unwary audacity to cite in her justification the pensions allowed by Elizabeth to her adversaries in Scotland, and especially to her son. But except for this single instance of oversight or perversity, her defence was throughout a masterpiece of indomitable ingenuity, of delicate and steadfast courage, of womanly dignity and genius.

Finally she demanded, as she had demanded before, a trial either before the estates of the realm lawfully assembled, or else before the Queen in council. So closed the second day of the trial; and before the next day's work could begin a note of two or three lines hastily written at midnight informed the commissioners that Elizabeth had suddenly determined to adjourn the expected judgment and transfer the place of it to the star-chamber. Here, on October 25, the commissioners again met; and one of them alone, Lord Zouch, dissented from the verdict by which Mary was found guilty of having, since June 1 preceding, compassed and imagined divers matters tending to the destruction of Elizabeth. This verdict was conveyed to her, about three weeks later, by Lord Buckhurst and Robert Beale, clerk of the privy council.

Mary received the announcement with majestic tranquillity, expressing in dignified terms her readiness to die, her consciousness that she was a martyr for her religion, and her total ignorance of any conspiracy against the life of Elizabeth. At night she took a graceful and affectionate leave of her

attendants, distributed among them her money and jewels, wrote out in full the various legacies to be conveyed by her will, and charged her apothecary, Gorion, with her last messages for the King of Spain. In these messages the whole nature of the woman was revealed. Not a single friend, not a single enemy, was forgotten; the slightest service, the slightest wrong, had its place assigned in her faithful and implacable memory for retribution or reward. Forgiveness of injuries was as alien from her fierce and loyal spirit as forgetfulness of benefits; the destruction of England and its liberties by Spanish invasion and conquest was the strongest aspiration of her parting soul. At eight next morning she entered the hall of execution, after having taken leave of the weeping envoy from Scotland, to whom she gave a brief message for her son; took her seat on the scaffold, listened with an air of even cheerful unconcern to the reading of the sentence, solemnly declared her innocence of the charge conveyed in it and her consolation in the prospect of ultimate justice, rejected the professional services of Richard Fletcher, Dean of Peterborough, lifted up her voice in Latin against his in English prayer, and when he and his fellow-worshippers had fallen duly silent, prayed aloud for the prosperity of her own Church, for Elizabeth, for her son, and for all the enemies whom she had commended over night to the notice of the Spanish invader; then, with no less courage than had marked every hour and every action of her life, received the stroke of death from the wavering hand of the headsman.

Mary Stuart was in many respects the creature of her age, of her creed, and of her station; but the noblest and most

oteworthy qualities of her nature were independent of rank, pinion, or time. Even the detractors who defend her con- uct on the plea that she was a dastard and a dupe, are com- elled in the same breath to retract this implied reproach, nd to admit, with illogical acclamation and incongruous pplause, that the world never saw more splendid courage at ne service of more brilliant intelligence; that a braver, if ot "a rarer spirit never did steer humanity." A kinder r more faithful friend, a deadlier or more dangerous enemy, would be impossible to dread or to desire. Passion alone ould shake the double fortress of her impregnable heart and ver-active brain. The passion of love, after very sufficient xperience, she apparently and naturally outlived; the passion f hatred and revenge was as inextinguishable in her inmost ature as the emotion of loyalty and gratitude. Of repentance would seem that she knew as little as of fear; having been rained in her infancy in a religion where the Decalogue was upplanted by the Creed. Adept as she was in the most xquisite delicacy of dissimulation, the most salient note of her riginal disposition was daring, rather than subtlety. Beside r behind the voluptuous or intellectual attractions of beauty nd culture, she had about her the fresher charm of a fearless nd frank simplicity, a genuine and enduring pleasure in small nd harmless things no less than in such as were neither. In 562, she amused herself for some days by living "with her ttle troop" in the house of a burgess of St. Andrews "like burgess's wife," assuring the English ambassador that he ould not find the Queen there,—"nor I know not myself here she is become." From Sheffield Lodge, twelve years

later, she applied to the Archbishop of Glasgow and the Cardinal of Guise for some pretty little dogs, to be sent her in baskets very warmly packed—" for besides reading and working, I take pleasure only in all the little animals that I can get."

No lapse of reconciling time, no extent of comparative indulgence, could break her in to resignation, submission, or toleration of even partial restraint. Three months after the massacre of St. Bartholomew had caused some additional restrictions to be placed upon her freedom of action, Shrewsbury writes to Burghley that " rather than continue this imprisonment she sticks not to say she will give her body, her son, and country for liberty "; nor did she ever show any excess of regard for any of the three. For her own freedom of will and of way, of passion and of action, she cared much; for her creed she cared something; for her country she cared less than nothing. She would have flung Scotland with England into the hellfire of Spanish Catholicism rather than forego the faintest chance of personal revenge. Her profession of a desire to be instructed in the doctrines of Anglican Protestantism was so transparently a pious fraud as rather to afford confirmation than to arouse suspicion of her fidelity to the teaching of her Church. Elizabeth, so shamefully her inferior in personal loyalty, fidelity, and gratitude, was as clearly her superior on the one all-important point of patriotism. The saving salt of Elizabeth's character, with all its well-nigh incredible mixture of heroism and egotism, meanness and magnificence, was simply this; that, overmuch as she loved herself, she did yet love England

better. Her best though not her only fine qualities were national and political, the high public virtues of a good public servant; in the private and personal qualities which attract and attach a friend to his friend and a follower to his leader, no man or woman was ever more constant and more eminent than Mary Queen of Scots.

MADAME DE MAINTENON

(1635—1719)

HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

FRANÇOISE D'AUBIGNÉ, Marquise de Maintenon, the second wife of Louis XIV., and unacknowledged Queen of France for the last thirty years of his reign, was born in a prison at Niort on November 27, 1635. Her father, Constant d'Aubigné, was the son of Agrippa d'Aubigné, the famous friend and general of Henry IV., and had been imprisoned as a Huguenot malcontent, but her mother, a fervent Catholic, had the child baptised in her religion, her sponsors being the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, father of the author of the *Maxims,* and the Comtesse de Neuillant. In 1639, Constant d'Aubigné was released from prison and took all his family with him to Martinique, where he died in 1645, after having lost what fortune remained to him at cards. Madame d'Aubigné returned to France, and from sheer poverty unwillingly yielded her daughter to her sister-in-law, Madame de Villette, who made the child very happy, but unfortunately for her, converted, or pretended to convert, her to Protestantism. When this was known, an order of state was issued that she should be entrusted to Madame de Neuillant, her god mother. Every means, every indignity even, was now used to convert

MADAME DE MAINTENON.

er back to Catholicism, but at the last she only yielded on
ıe condition that she need not believe that the soul of
Iadame de Villette was lost. Once reconverted, she was
eglected, and sent home to live with her mother, who had
ıly a small pension of 200 livres a year, which ceased on
er death in 1650. The Chevalier de Meré, a man of some
terary distinction, who had made her acquaintance at
Iadame de Neuillant's, discovered her penniless condition,
ıd introduced his "young Indian," as he called her, to
carron, the famous wit and comic writer, at whose house
l the literary society of the day assembled. The wit, who
as of good legal family, and had a kind heart, took a fancy
the friendless girl, and offered either to pay for her
lmission to a convent, or, though he was deformed and
ı invalid, to marry her himself. She accepted his
fer of marriage, and became Madame Scarron in 1651.
or nine years she was not only his most faithful nurse,
ıt an attraction to his house, where she tried to bridle
e licence of the conversation of the time. On the
ath of Scarron in 1660 Anne of Austria continued
s pension to his widow, and even increased it to 2,000
vres a year, which enabled her to entertain and fre-
ent the literary society her husband had made her ac-
ainted with; but on the Queen-mother's death, in 1666,
e King, in spite of all the efforts of her friends, refused to
ntinue her pension, and she prepared to leave Paris for
sbon as lady attendant to the Queen of Portugal. But
fore she started she met Madame de Montespan, who was
ready, though not avowedly, the King's mistress, at the

Hôtel d'Albret, and the lady in question took such a fancy to her that she obtained the continuance of her pension, which put off for ever the question of going to Portugal.

Madame de Montespan did yet more for her, for when, in 1669, her first child by the King was born, Madame Scarron was established with a large income and a large staff of servants at Vaugirard to bring up the King's children in secrecy as they were born. In 1674, the King determined to have his children at court, and their governess, who had now made sufficient fortune to buy the estate of Maintenon, accompanied them. The King had now many opportunities of seeing Madame Scarron, and, though at first he was prejudiced against her, her even temper showed so advantageously against the storms of passion and jealousy exhibited by Madame de Montespan that she grew steadily in his favour, and had in 1678 the gratification of having her estate at Maintenon raised to a marquisate, and herself entitled Madame de Maintenon by the King himself. Such favours brought down the fury of Madame de Montespan's jealousy, and Madame de Maintenon's position was almost unendurable, until, in 1680, the King severed their connection by making the latter second lady in waiting to the dauphiness, and soon after Madame de Montespan left the court. The new "amie" used her influence on the side of decency, and the Queen openly declared she had never been so well treated as at this time, and eventually died in Madame de Maintenon's arms in 1683.

The Queen's death opened the way to yet greater advancement; in 1684, she was made first lady in waiting to the

uphiness, and, in the winter of 1685, or, Voltaire says, in nuary, 1686, she was privately married to the King by arlay, Archbishop of Paris, in the presence, it is believed, Père la Chaise, the King's confessor, the Marquis de Iontchevreuil, the Chevalier de Forbin, and Bontemps. o written proof of the marriage is extant, but that it took ace is nevertheless certain.

Her life during the thirty years of her second married life ust be studied from more than one side, and can be so fully om her letters, which are masterpieces even of an age when Iadame de Sevigné wrote, and of which many authentic amples are extant.

As a wife she is wholly admirable; she had to entertain man who would not be amused, and had to submit to that rribly strict court etiquette of absolute obedience to the ing's inclinations, which Saint-Simon so vividly describes, id yet be always cheerful, and never complain of weariness ill-health. Her political influence has probably been over-ated, but it was supreme in matters of detail. The ministers the day used to discuss and arrange all the business to be one with the King beforehand with her, and it was all done her cabinet and in her presence, but the King in more nportant matters often chose not to consult her. Such istakes as, for instance, the replacing of Catinat by Villeroi ay be attributed to her, but not whole policies—notably, cording to Saint-Simon, not the policy with regard to the panish succession. Even the revocation of the Edict of antes and the Dragonnades have been laid to her charge, ut there can be no doubt that, in spite of ardent Catholicism,

she retained a liking for her father's religion, and opposed, if not very vigorously, the cruelties of the Dragonnades. She was probably afraid to say much, or peril her great reputation for devotion, which had in 1692 obtained for her from Innocent XII. the right of visitation over all the convents in France. Where she deserves blame is in her use of her power for personal patronage, as in compassing the promotions of Chamillart and Villeroi, and the frequent assistance given to her brother, Comte Charles d'Aubigné. Her influence was on the whole a moderating and prudent force, and the King, when he wanted her advice, used to say, "*Qu'en pensez votre Solidité?*" or "*Consultons la Raison.*" Her social influence was not as great as it might have been, owing to her holding no recognised position at court, but it was always exercised on the side of decency and morality, and it must not be forgotten that from her former life she was intimate with the literary people of the day, and never deserted her old friends.

Side by side with this public life, which wearied her with its shadowy power, occasionally crossed by a desire to be recognised as Queen, she passed a nobler and sweeter private existence as the foundress of St. Cyr. Madame de Maintenon was a born teacher; she had so won the hearts of her first pupils that they preferred her to their own mother, and was similarly successful later with the young and impetuous Duchesse de Bourgogne, and she had always wished to establish a home for poor girls of good family placed in such straits as she herself had experienced. As soon as her fortunes began to mend, she started a small home for poor

irls at Ruel, which she afterwards moved to Noisy, and vhich was the nucleus of the splendid institution of St. Cyr, vhich the King had endowed in 1686 at her request out of he funds of the Abbey of St. Denis. She was in her element here. She herself drew up the rules of the institution; she xamined every minute detail; she befriended her pupils in very way; and her heart often turned from the weariness f Versailles, or of Marly, to her "little girls" at St. Cyr. t was for the girls at St. Cyr that Racine wrote his *Esther* nd his *Athalie,* and it was because he managed the affairs f St. Cyr well that Chamillart became controller-general of he finances.

The later years of her power were marked by the promo- ion of her old pupils, the children of the King and Madame e Montespan, to high dignity between the blood royal and he peers of the realm, and it was doubtless under the nfluence of her dislike for the Duc d'Orléans that the King rew up his will, leaving the personal care of his successor o the Duc de Maine, and hampering the Duc d'Orléans by council of regency. On, or even before, her husband's eath she retired to St. Cyr, and had the chagrin of seeing ll her plans for the advancement of the Duc de Maine over- hrown by means of the parliament of Paris. However, the Regent Orléans in no way molested her, but on the contrary isited her at St. Cyr, and continued her pension of 48,000 ivres. She spent her last years at St. Cyr in perfect seclu- ion, but an object of great interest to all visitors to France, vho, however, with the exception of Peter the Great, found impossible to get an audience with her.

On April 15, 1719, she died, and was buried in the choir at St. Cyr, bequeathing her estate at Maintenon to her niece, the only daughter of her brother Charles, and wife of the Maréchal de Noailles, to whose family it still belongs.

Such was the life of the extraordinary woman who kept till the last the heart of Louis XIV., marked by a virtue almost amounting to prudery, in strong contrast to the generations which preceded and followed her, by a love of power, and a use of it which can indeed be excused by her early life, but which was not exercised for the good of France, and by a religious devotion which was narrow, if not violently fanatical, but sweetened throughout by her ardent love for her "little girls," whom she had saved from the difficulties of life, and whom she loved with all a mother's love.

DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH.

LOUISE DE QUÉROUALLE, DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH

(1649—1734)

JOHN HENEAGE JESSE

WHEN it was the policy of Louis XIV. to detach the Court of England from the Triple League, he is well known to have selected the charming Duchess of Orleans, the favourite sister of Charles, to persuade him to that disgraceful measure. To any other monarch he would have despatched a Sully or a Richelieu: to Charles he sent a brilliant embassy of gay men and beautiful women, accompanied by the trappings of pleasure and the promise of gold. "Louis," says Hume, "in order to fix him in the French interests, resolved to bind him by the ties of pleasure, the only ones which with him were irresistible; and he made him a present of a French mistress, by whose means he hoped for the future to govern him." We need scarcely add that Mademoiselle de Quéroualle was the person alluded to by Hume. She was about five-and-twenty, when in 1670, she appeared in the train of the Duchess of Orleans at the English Court: her manners were fascinating, her wit agreeble, and her face beautiful. Charles was struck with her accomplishments, and Buckingham and the enemies of the Duchess of Cleveland assisting with their intrigues, she shortly became the professed mistress of the easy Monarch.

The Peerages style her the Lady Louise Renée de Penencovet de Quéroualle, but this long list of names was shortly abbreviated by the English into the singular and familiar one of Carwell. Little is known of her origin and early history, but that she was descended from a noble family in Lower Brittany, and that she had been taken from a convent to be maid of honour to the Duchess. On accepting the proposals of Charles, she received the same appointment to his Queen. Her arrival in England was celebrated both by Dryden and St. Evremond; by the former in dull, and by the latter in indecent verse.

From this period we find her a spy on the actions of Charles; a mischievous meddler in the English Court; a promoter of French interests, and of English debasement and disorders. There is no dishonest transaction—no profligate political intrigue which disgraced the last years of this unhappy reign in which she does not appear as a principal mover. The King's acceptance of a pension from France; the disgraceful engagements with that country; the crusade against parliaments; and the treachery to the Dutch, were alike hatched in her closet and fostered under her influence. Thus could a trifler and a beauty sway the destinies of Europe. With a head teeming with politics and a heart with the love of pleasure, the intriguing Frenchwoman was as much detested by the nation as she was beloved by the King. Charles continued more constant to her than to any of his other mistresses, and she duped and enchanted him to the end.

On the 19th of August, 1673, the King suddenly raised her

to the highest honours in the land. He created her by letters patent, Baroness of Petersfield, Countess of Farnham, and Duchess of Portsmouth, while the French King showed his gratitude by conferring on her the Duchy of Aubigny in France. Two years afterwards, in 1675, her young son by Charles was created Duke of Richmond and Lennox.

To these honours were added pensions and profits sufficient to beggar a far wealthier Court than that of Charles. In a pasquinade, printed in 1680, and entitled *Articles of High Treason Against the Duchess of Portsmouth,* among other grave charges (such as an intention to subvert the government of Church and State, and to restore tyranny and the Pope), she is accused of having profited by the sale of every place of trust and emolument in the gift of the Court. It is even said that when Lord Ossory was sent by Charles to Madrid, in order to present his niece, the young Queen of Spain, with jewels valued at fifteen thousand pounds, the Duchess caused Lord Ossory's services to be dispensed with, and prevailed on her lover to bestow the jewels on herself. In the notes to Howell's *State Trials,* she is stated to have refused a hundred thousand pounds to procure the pardon of the celebrated Lord Russell. As no authority, however, is produced, and as the rejection of so splendid a bribe is opposed to all our preconceived notions of her character, the story may reasonably be doubted.

According to Evelyn, the apartments of the Duchess of Portsmouth, at Whitehall, had ten times the " richness and glory " of the Queen's. An account of a morning visit

which he paid to them in 1683, in company with the King, is amusingly detailed in his diary. "Following his Majesty," he says, "through the gallery, I went with the few who attended him, into the Duchess of Portsmouth's dressing-room within her bed-chamber, where she was in her morning loose garment, her maids combing, newly out of her bed, his Majesty and the gallants standing about her; but that which engaged my curiosity was the rich and splendid furniture of this woman's apartment, now twice or thrice pulled down and rebuilt to satisfy her prodigal and expensive pleasures, while her Majesty's does not exceed some gentlemen's wives in furniture and accommodation. Here I saw the new fabric of French tapistry, for design, tenderness of work, and incomparable imitation of the best paintings, beyond anything I had ever beheld. Some pieces had Versailles, St. Germains, and other palaces of the French King, with huntings, figures, and landscapes, exotic fowls, and all to the life rarely done. Then for Japan cabinets, screens, pendule clocks, great vases of wrought plate, tables, stands, chimney furniture, sconces, branches, braseras, etc., all of massive silver, and out of number; besides some of his Majesty's best paintings. Surfeiting of this, I dined at Sir Stephen Fox's, and went contented home to my poor, but quiet, villa. What contentment can there be in the riches and splendour of this world purchased with vice and dishonour?" These splendid apartments had been three times rebuilt for a whim. They were eventually destroyed by fire in 1691.

The countenance of the Duchess of Portsmouth, though undoubtedly beautiful, possessed the worst of all faults, a

vant of expression. Evelyn says, in his opinion she had a simple baby face," and in a poem of the time we find:

> "That baby face of thine and those black eyes,
> Methinks should ne'er a hero's love surprise;
> None, that had eyes, e'er saw in that French face
> O'ermuch of beauty, form, or comely grace."

Another contemporary, Reresby, speaks of her merely as a very fine woman."

Horace Walpole mentions a portrait of her, which he ays was once in the royal collection, in which, in the character f Iphigenia, and Charles in that of Cymon, they are made o illustrate the beautiful lines in Dryden's poem:

> "Where, in a plain defended by a wood,
> Crept through the matted grass a crystal flood,
> By which an alabaster fountain stood:
> And on the margin of the fount was laid,
> Attended by her slaves, a sleeping maid."

Another picture of her by Sir Peter Lely, in which the oyal mistress and her infant son, the Duke of Richmond, re represented as the Madonna and Child, was painted for convent of nuns in France.

In a little work, published shortly after the death of Charles, and purporting to be a secret history of his reign, it asserted that the Duchess was actually married to her oyal lover by the Common Prayer Book, and according to ie ceremonies of the Church of England. As Queen Catherine was still alive, this must have been done to satisfy ie lady's conscience. In a pasquinade also, already referred o, we find the twentieth Article of Treason inserted as fol-

lows: "That she has by her creatures and friends, given out and whispered abroad, that she was married to his Majesty, and that her son, the Duke of Richmond, is his Majesty's legitimate son, and consequently Prince of Wales, his health being frequently drunk by her and her creatures in her night debauches and merry meetings, to the great dishonour and reflection of his Majesty, and the manifest peril and danger of these Kingdoms." It is certain, that, in order to gain her over to his interests, the unprincipled Shaftesbury flattered her with the hopes of her son's succeeding to the throne.

From the fate of the Duchess of Cleveland she seemed to have learned wisdom. Instead of storming her easy lover into compliance, as did her imperious predecessor, she enslaved him by the usual arts of her sex; and by means of tears, jealousies, affectations of sickness, and real caprice, wound herself securely round his heart. The kind feeling which Charles ever bore towards the merry and warm-hearted Nell Gwynn appears to have caused her some uneasiness. But otherwise she had little reason to complain; her influence over the heart and the politics of the King continued unshaken to the last; and as she was the longest, so was she the latest passion of Charles. As she was nearly forty years of age at the time of his death, she must have been gifted with other powers of pleasing besides beauty. Burnet mentions her uneasiness on hearing that Louis XIV. had sent away his mistress, Madame de Montespan, on account of religious scruples, and that he had afterwards taken the sacrament. Charles, however, was unlikely to

sacrifice his pleasures to his principles, and it must have been a stretch of imagination to have imagined him a devotee.

Though apparently attached to the person of Charles, it did not prevent her from being unfaithful to him. Lord Danby, who possessed advantages of person and fortune, and the gallant and handsome Grand Prior of Vendôme,—the soldier, the statesman, and the priest,—were believed to have shared her favours with the King. Unlike the Duchess of Cleveland, she was particularly circumspect in her amours, and her infidelity seems to have been concealed from Charles. Unlike her predecessor in another respect, she was generally respectful to the Queen, with whom her appointment as lady of the bed-chamber constantly brought her in contact.

Charles spoke of her with great affection in his last moments, and his death seems to have cost her some tears. "I went," writes M. Barillon to Louis XIV., "to the apartments of the Duchess of Portsmouth. I found her overwhelmed with grief, the physicians having deprived her of all hope." James honoured her with a visit of condolence after the death of Charles.

Having now no tie to bind her to England, she retired, with what money and jewels she had amassed, to her native country. Her former habits of splendour, and a fatal addiction to play, proved destructive to her fortunes, and she finally subsisted on a small pension from the French Government. Voltaire saw her at the age of seventy, and mentions in his *Siècle de Louis XIV.* that years had but little impaired her beauty, and that her face was still lovely, and her person commanding. Lady Sunderland speaks of her, in 1690, as

"scandalous and poor," and some years afterwards we find her mentioned in the *Memoirs* of the Duc de Saint-Simon, as very old, very penitent, and very poor—"*fort vielle, très convertie et pénitente, et très mal dans ses affaires.*"

The Duchess paid two visits to England after the death of Charles, once in 1699, and again in 1715, when she was presented to Queen Caroline, then Princess of Wales. On the latter occasion she is said to have had the effrontery to apply for a pension to George I. She turned devotee in her old age, and died at Aubigny, in France, in November, 1734, in her ninetieth year.

MARGARET OF PARMA.

MARGARET OF PARMA, REGENT OF THE NETHERLANDS

(1522—1586)

WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT

MARGARET, DUCHESS OF PARMA, was the natural daughter of Charles V., born about four years before his marriage with Isabella of Portugal. Margaret's mother, Margaret Vander Gheenst, belonged to a noble Flemish house. Her parents both died during her infancy. The little orphan was received into the family of Count Hoogstraten, who, with his wife, reared her with the same tenderness as they did their own offspring. At the age of seventeen she was unfortunate enough to attract the eye of Charles V., who, then in his twenty-third year, was captivated by the charms of the Flemish maiden. Margaret's virtue was not proof against the seductions of her royal suitor; and the victim of love—or of vanity—became the mother of a child, who received her own name of Margaret.

The Emperor's aunt, then Regent of the Netherlands, took charge of the infant; and on the death of that princess she was taken into the family of the Emperor's sister, Mary, Queen of Hungary, who succeeded in the Regency. Margaret's birth did not long remain a secret; and she received an education suited to the high station she was to occupy in

life. When only twelve years of age, the Emperor gave her in marriage to Alexander de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, some fifteen years older than herself. The ill-fated connection did not subsist long, as before twelve months had elapsed, it was terminated by the violent death of her husband.

When she had reached the age of womanhood, the hand of the young widow was bestowed, together with the Duchies of Parma and Placentia as her dowry, on Ottavio Farnese, grandson of Paul III. The bridegroom was but twelve years old. Thus again it was Margaret's misfortune that there should be such disparity between her own age and that of her husband, as to exclude anything like sympathy or similarity in their tastes. In the present instance, the boyish years of Ottavio inspired her with a sentiment not very different from contempt, that in later life settled into an indifference in which both parties appear to have shared, and which, as a contemporary remarks with *naïveté,* was only softened into a kindlier feeling when the husband and wife had been long separated from each other. In truth, Margaret was too ambitious of power to look on her husband in any other light than that of a rival.

In her general demeanour, her air, her gait, she bore great resemblance to her aunt, the Regent. Like her, Margaret was excessively fond of hunting, and she followed the chase with an intrepidity that might have daunted the courage of the keenest sportsman. She had but little of the natural softness that belongs to the sex, but in her whole deportment was singularly masculine; so that, to render the words of the

historian by a homely phrase, in her woman's dress she seemed like a man in petticoats. As if to add to the illusion, Nature had given her somewhat of a beard; and, to crown the whole, the malady to which she was constitutionally subject was a disease to which women are but rarely liable,—the gout. It was good evidence of her descent from Charles V.

Though masculine in her appearance, Margaret was not destitute of the kindler qualities which are the glory of her sex. Her disposition was good; but she relied much on the advice of others, and her more objectionable acts may probably be referred rather to their influence than to any inclination of her own.

Her understanding was excellent, her apprehension quick. She showed much versatility in accommodating herself to the exigencies of her position, as well as adroitness in the management of affairs, which she may have acquired in the schools of Italian politics. In religion, she was as orthodox as Philip II. could desire. The famous Ignatius Loyola had been her confessor in early days. The lessons of humility which he inculcated were not lost on her, as may be inferred from the care she took to perform the ceremony, in Holy Week, of washing the dirty feet—she preferred them in this condition—of twelve poor maidens; outstripping, in this particular, the humility of the Pope himself. Such was the character of Margaret of Parma, who now, in the thirty-eighth year of her age, was called, at a most critical period, to take the helm of the Netherlands.

The appointment seems to have given equal satisfaction to

herself and to her husband, and no objection was made to Philip's purpose of taking back with him to Castile their little son, Alexander Farnese,—a name destined to become in later times so renowned in the Netherlands. The avowed purpose was to give the boy a training suited to his rank, under the eye of Philip; combined with which, according to the historian, was the desire of holding a hostage for the fidelity of Margaret and of her husband, whose dominions in Italy lay contiguous to those of Philip in that country.

Early in June, 1559, Margaret of Parma, having reached the Low Countries, made her entrance in great state into Brussels, where Philip awaited her, surrounded by his whole court of Spanish and Flemish nobles. The Duke of Savoy was also present, as well as Margaret's husband, the Duke of Parma, then in attendance on Philip. The appointment of Margaret was not distasteful to the people of the Netherlands, for she was their countrywoman, and her early days had been passed amongst them. Her presence was not less welcome to Philip, who looked forward with eagerness to the hour of his departure. His first purpose was to present the new Regent to the nation, and for this he summoned a meeting of the states-general at Ghent, in the coming August.

The Regent was to be assisted in the government by three councils, which of old time had existed in the land: the council of finance, for the administration, as the name implies, of the revenues; the privy council, for affairs of justice, and the internal concerns of the country; and the council of state, for matters relating to peace and war, and the foreign policy of the nation. Into this last, the supreme

council, entered several of the Flemish nobles, and among them the Prince of Orange and Count Egmont. There were, besides, Count Barlaimont, president of the council of finance; Viglius, president of the privy council, and Granvelle, Bishop of Arras.

The tidings of the Regent's abdication were received with dismay throughout the provinces. All the errors of her government, her acts of duplicity, the excessive rigour with which she had of late visited offences,—all were forgotten in the regret felt for her departure. Men thought only of the prosperity which the country had enjoyed under her rule, the confidence which in earlier years she had bestowed on the friends of the people, the generous manner in which she had interposed, on more than one occasion, to mitigate the hard policy of the Court of Madrid. And as they turned from these more brilliant passages of her history, their hearts were filled with dismay while they looked gloomily into the future.

Addresses poured in upon her from all quarters. The different cities vied with one another in expressions of regret for her departure, while they invoked the blessings of Heaven on her remaining days. More than one of the provinces gave substantial evidence of their good-will by liberal donatives. Brabant voted her the sum of 25,000 florins, and Flanders 30,000. The neighbouring princes, and among them Elizabeth of England, joined with the people of the Netherlands in professions of respect for the Regent, as well as of regret that she was to relinquish the government.

Cheered by these assurances of the consideration in which she was held both at home and abroad, Margaret quitted Brussels at the close of December, 1567. She was attended to the borders of Brabant by Alva, and thence conducted to Germany by Count Mansfeldt and an escort of Flemish nobles. There, bidding adieu to all that remained of her former state, she pursued her journey quietly to Italy. For some time she continued with her husband in his ducal residence at Parma. But, wherever lay the fault, it was Margaret's misfortune to taste but little of the sweets of domestic intercourse. Soon afterwards she removed to Naples, and there permanently established her abode, on estates which had been granted her by the crown. Many years later, when her son, Alexander Farnese, was called to the government of the Netherlands, she quitted her retirement to take part with him in the direction of public affairs. It was but for a moment; and her present departure from the Netherlands may be regarded as the close of her political existence.

The government of Margaret continued from the autumn of 1559 to the end of 1567, a period of eight years. It was a stormy and most eventful period; for it was then that the minds of men were agitated to their utmost depths by the new doctrines which gave birth to the revolution. Margaret's Regency, indeed, may be said to have furnished the opening scenes of that great drama. The inhabitants of the Low Countries were accustomed to the sway of a woman. Margaret was the third of her line that had been intrusted with the Regency. In qualifications for the office, she was

probably not inferior to her predecessors. Her long residence in Italy had made her acquainted with the principles of government in a country where political science was more carefully studied than in any other quarter of Europe. She was habitually industrious, and her robust frame was capable of any amount of labour. If she was too masculine in her nature to allow of the softer qualities of her sex, she was, on the other hand, exempt from the fondness for pleasure, and from most of the frivolities which belonged to the women of the voluptuous clime in which she had lived. She was staunch in her devotion to the Catholic faith; and her loyalty was such, that, from the moment of assuming the government, she acknowledged no stronger motive than that of conformity to the will of her sovereign. She was fond of power; and she well knew that, with Philip, absolute conformity to his will was the only condition on which it was to be held.

With her natural good sense, and the general moderation of her views, she would, doubtless, have ruled over the land as prosperously as her predecessors, had the times been like theirs. But, unhappily for her, the times had greatly changed. Still Margaret, living on the theatre of action, and feeling the pressure of circumstances, would have gone too far to conform to the change. But, unfortunately, she represented a prince, dwelling at a distance, who knew no change himself, allowed no concessions to others,—whose conservative policy rested wholly on the past.

It was unfortunate for Margaret that she never fully possessed the confidence of Philip. Whether from distrust

of her more accommodating temper, or of her capacity for government, he gave a larger share of it, at the outset, to Granvelle than to her. If the Regent could have been blind to this, her eyes would soon have been opened to the fact by the rivals who hated the minister. It was not long before she hated him, too. But the removal of Granvelle did not establish her in her brother's confidence. It rather increased his distrust, by the necessity it imposed on her of throwing herself into the arms of the opposite party, the friends of the people. From this moment, Philip's confidence was more heartily bestowed on the Duke of Alva, even on the banished Granvelle, than on the Regent. Her letters remained too often unanswered. The answers, when they did come, furnished only dark and mysterious hints of the course to be pursued. She was left to work out the problem of government by herself, sure for every blunder to be called to a strict account. Rumours of the speedy coming of the King suggested the idea that her own dominion was transitory, soon to be superseded by that of a higher power.

At last came the Compromise and the League. Margaret's eyes seemed now to be first opened to the direction of the course she was taking. This was followed by the explosion of the iconoclasts. The shock fully awoke her from her delusion. She was as zealous for the Catholic Church as Philip himself; and she saw with horror that it was trembling to its foundations. A complete change seemed to take place in her convictions,—in her very nature. She repudiated all those with whom she had hitherto acted. She embraced, as heartily as he could desire, the stern policy of

Philip. She proscribed, she persecuted, she punished,—and that with an excess of vigour that does little honour to her memory. It was too late. The distrust of Philip was not to be removed by this tardy compliance with his wishes. A successor was already appointed; and at the very moment when she flattered herself that the tranquillity of the country, and her own authority, were established on a permanent basis, the Duke of Alva was on his march across the mountains.

Yet, it was fortunate for Margaret's reputation that she was succeeded in the government by a man like Alva. The darkest spots on her administration become light when brought into comparison with his reign of terror.

MARIE DE MANCINI

(1639—1715)

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

FROM the very moment that Madame de Mancini fell sick, she regarded herself as lost. Her husband, who was a great astrologer, had first predicted his own death, then that of his son who was killed at the combat at the Porte Saint-Antoine, and, finally, that of his wife, which was to occur in her forty-second year. Now the poor woman began to have some hope that her husband was mistaken this time, for she had but a few days left to complete her forty-second year, when, as we have said, she felt ill, and went to bed to rise no more. Her brother, the Cardinal, was present at her deathbed, and she expired, leaving her two daughters, Marie and Hortense, to his care.

Cardinal Mazarin, not forgetting his dying sister's charge regarding Marie and Hortense Mancini, or, still more anxious to attach himself to the King by all the links possible, hoped that one of these two young girls would interest him, as Olympia (Mancini) had done. The far-sighted minister was not mistaken: he counted upon Hortense; but, to his great astonishment, it was Marie who accomplished the work of his dreams.

She was a year or so younger than the King, and was ugly

MARIE DE MANCINI.

rather than beautiful. Her waist, which was large, might, it was true, become sightly in time; but at the present moment she was so thin, and her arms and her neck so long, and so lean, that her enormous waist was rather a defect than a mark of beauty. She was brown, or yellow, rather; her large, black eyes somewhat hard, and her mouth, garnished, it is true, with magnificent teeth, was large and flat. The result was that at first the hopes of the minister were frustrated, and the King scarcely paid any attention to either Marie or her sister.

But, if he did not notice the young girl, this was not the case with her. The sight of the handsome and majestic King had created a sentiment in her which was not merely that of respect: "For," says her sister in Saint-Réal's *Memoires,* "she was the only one not intimidated by the majestic port of the King, and although she was so amorous of him, she preserved the greatest liberty in talking to him."

This passion, encouraged by Mazarin, began to be noticed, and it reached the King's ears; at first he laughed at it, but gradually his glances fell upon her whom he had inspired: it is always sweet and flattering to be loved. Louis XIV. recognised the sentiment that Marie de Mancini had vowed so openly; then, as he saw more of her, he discovered that if Nature had somewhat neglected her face, she had, on the other hand, richly endowed her mind. Marie de Mancini was charming, and could chatter and talk delightfully; and, finally, she seemed to love Louis XIV. with all the qualities of her heart and mind.

However, at this very moment, the Cardinal was actively

engaged with an event that was destined to crush this budding love for his niece, which he had himself encouraged: this was the King's marriage.

The entire winter was spent in *fêtes* and masquerades. During these masquerades, the King never left Marie de Mancini, with whom he was now really in love. But this time the Queen busied herself about it.

Indeed, the King never went anywhere without Marie de Mancini, or, rather, he never went anywhere unless she was there. The eyes of the Queen never beheld him without Mademoiselle de Mancini, talking to her in a low voice, and laughing loudly, without being in the least restrained for the sake of appearances; therefore, the Queen reproached him about her, as she had done about Mademoiselle d'Argencourt.

Unfortunately, the King was a year older now; and he was much more than a year over age; he replied sharply that they had held him a prisoner when he was a child, but he was free now that he was a man.

Then the Queen began to suspect something,—that it was Mazarin who had an underhand hope to wed his niece to the King. She forgot her own connection with the Cardinal, and trembled at that audacious idea.

However, for some time the Cardinal had realised that the power would pass insensibly from the hands of the Queen into those of the King, and all his calculations had been directed towards getting into the good graces of the King, for it mattered little now if the Queen thought ill of him. Therefore, he did not check his feelings, and said openly:

"That she had no mind; that she had shown more affection for the House of Austria than for the one which she had entered; that the King, her husband, had had good reasons to hate her, and to distrust her; that she was religious only from necessity; and, finally, that she only cared about good cheer, and did not trouble herself about anything else."

All these attacks of the Cardinal came back to the Queen, and at this particular moment greatly alarmed her; therefore, she secretly assembled her cleverest councillors of state, and the most celebrated lawyers in Parliament, to learn if, in case her son married without her consent, the marriage would be valid. All said "no" with one voice, and advised the Queen to protest at once against that intended marriage. Brienne, who had always enjoyed Anne of Austria's confidence, was charged to have this important act drawn up, and he promised to have it registered privately in Parliament, in case the King secretly married the Cardinal's niece.

The Queen never opened her mouth regarding these fears to the Minister. She was, therefore, greatly astonished when one day he approached the question himself, being the first to speak of the pretended marriage to the Queen, laughing at the folly of his niece, who could believe the promises made to her by a King of twenty years, but laughing in such a way that it was easy to see that his pleasantry was more of an overture than a reproach. The Queen instantly seized upon the occasion, and after having listened coldly to the Cardinal: "Monsieur," she said, "I cannot believe that the King would be capable of such baseness; but if it is possible that he has had such a thought, I assure you that all

France will revolt against him, and against you; and that, as for me, I will place myself at the head of this revolt, and draw my second son into it."

Several days afterwards the protestation was prepared and shown to the Cardinal. It was then that Mazarin, renouncing his hopes, renewed his overtures to Spain, while he seemed to continue his negotiations with Savoy. In reality, both of these marriages were advantageous: the alliance with Savoy was a means of continuing the war; the alliance with Spain was a means of securing peace.

Spring brought back the preoccupations of war. Dunkerque was taken on the 14th of June; but the joy consequent upon that event was soon tempered by an accident to the King. A low fever, that lasted till the 22d, made such progress that his life was despaired of. At last, the physicians announced that he was out of danger, and there was great joy at Court. The King returned to Compiègne, then to Fontainebleau, and then to Paris.

This illness had only strengthened the love of Louis XIV. for Marie de Mancini; for during his illness, the young girl had shown every sign of devotion within her power; but the Queen hastened, what had been called, since the beginning of the year, the journey to Lyons.

The journey to Lyons had a visible purpose and a hidden purpose. The visible purpose was to bring the King into relation with Marguerite of Savoy, who always had a possible chance of being Queen of France; the hidden purpose was to force Spain and its King to give the Infanta to France. The departure was arranged for the 22d of October.

What was strange regarding the trip was that Marie de Mancini went along, the King having refused to be separated from her; or, perhaps, having told her that the projected alliance with the Princess Marguerite was not really serious.

On learning that the King of France was going to marry the Princess Marguerite, Philip IV. exclaimed: "*Esto no puede ser, y no sera!*" ("That must not, and shall not, be!") Consequently, Philip IV. called Antonio Pimentelli, and sent him hurriedly to France.

Now, while the King, the Queen, the Cardinal, Madame de Savoie, and the two princesses entered through one door, Don Antonio Pimentelli entered through the other, and demanded an audience of Mazarin the same evening. On seeing him, Mazarin, who had known him for a long time, said:

"Are you chased out of Spain by the King, your master, or have you come to offer us the Infanta?"

"I come to offer you the Infanta, Monsieur," said the ambassador, "and here are my full powers to treat with you regarding this marriage." With these words, he presented a letter from Philip IV. to the minister.

It was what Mazarin had hoped for, and dreamed of; he instantly ran to the Queen, and as he found her alone, thoughtful, and melancholy:

"Good news, Madame," he said, laughing, "good news."

"What is it?" asked the Queen, "will there be peace?"

"Better than that, Madame," replied the Minister, "for I bring Your Majesty both peace and the Infanta."

But Mazarin had a great task to perform. For a long time, he had been accused by everybody, including the Queen, as we have said, of wishing to place his niece upon the throne of France. Perhaps this was true, for the minister had realised the slight advantage a union with Savoy or Portugal would be to France; but everything was changed since the visit of Don Pimentelli had materialised the hopes that the Cardinal had nourished with regard to Spain.

He resolved to attack vigorously this love which the King manifested, under all circumstances, for Marie de Mancini, and to tear from the hearts of the two lovers, if not passion, at least hope.

It was not an easy thing to do: the empire that Marie had taken was still greater in that she owed it, not to her beauty, but to her very superior intelligence. Louis was, in truth, as amorous of her mind as of her person. One may believe, therefore, that his Minister received a rude welcome when he spoke of a separation; but the Minister would not allow himself to be intimidated, and remained firm. Louis XIV. then tried to bribe him by offering to marry his niece, but this offer was not accepted.

"Sire," replied the Cardinal, "if Your Majesty were capable of such a weakness, I would rather stab my niece with my own hands, than to favour such a marriage, which would be no less beneath the dignity of the Crown than prejudicial to France; and if Your Majesty persists in this idea, I declare to you that I will board a ship with my nieces, and carry them across the seas."

The day for the departure of the young girls was fixed

for the 22d of June. On the evening before, the sad and dejected King went to see the Queen. The Queen taking a torch from the table, stepped with him into the *cabinet des bains*. They remained there nearly an hour; the King came out first, his eyes all red with tears; and then the Queen, much affected herself, who said to Madame de Motteville:

"The King has my pity; he is perfectly tender and reasonable; but I have told him that I am sure he will thank me one day for the sorrow I caused him."

The dreaded morrow arrived. The hour of farewell came in its turn; the carriage that was to take the three sisters away was waiting. Marie de Mancini came to the King, and found him weeping.

"Oh, Sire," she exclaimed, "you are King! You weep and I go?"

But Louis XIV. did not reply to this strong and concise appeal, and the young girl, feeling all hope vanish, withdrew in pride, got into the carriage in which her sisters, Hortense and Anne, were waiting, and left for Brouage, which was the place chosen for her exile.

The King followed, accompanying the coach, and paused at the spot where the coach disappeared; then he returned to the Queen, and shortly afterwards left for Chantilly, to bury himself in solitude with his memories and his grief.

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF ENGLAND

(1533—1603)

JOHN RICHARD GREEN

NEVER had the fortunes of England sunk to a lower ebb than at the moment when Elizabeth mounted the throne. The country was humiliated by defeat and brought to the verge of rebellion by the bloodshed and misgovernment of Mary's reign. The old social discontent, trampled down for a time by the horsemen of Somerset, remained a menace to public order. The religious strife had passed beyond hope of reconciliation, now that the reformers were parted from their opponents by the fires of Smithfield and the party of the New Learning all but dissolved. The more earnest Catholics were bound helplessly to Rome. The temper of the Protestants, burned at home or driven into exile abroad, had become a fiercer thing, and the Calvinistic refugees were pouring back from Geneva with dreams of revolutionary change in Church and State. England, dragged at the heels of Philip into a useless and ruinous war, was left without an ally save Spain; while France, mistress of Calais, became mistress of the Channel. Not only was Scotland a standing danger in the north, through the French marriage of its Queen Mary Stuart and its consequent bondage to French policy; but Mary Stuart and her husband now assumed the

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

style and arms of English sovereigns, and threatened to rouse every Catholic throughout the realm against Elizabeth's title. In presence of this host of dangers the country lay helpless, without army or fleet, or the means of manning one, for the treasury, already drained by the waste of Edward's reign, had been utterly exhausted by Mary's restoration of the Church-lands in possession of the Crown, and by the cost of her war with France.

England's one hope lay in the character of her Queen. Elizabeth was now in her twenty-fifth year. Personally she had more than her mother's beauty; her figure was commanding, her face long but queenly and intelligent, her eyes quick and fine. She had grown up amidst the liberal culture of Henry's court a bold horsewoman, a good shot, a graceful dancer, a skilled musician, and an accomplished scholar. She studied every morning the Greek Testament, and followed this by the tragedies of Sophocles, or orations of Demosthenes, and could "rub up her rusty Greek" at need to bandy pedantry with a Vice-Chancellor. But she was far from being a mere pedant. The new literature which was springing up around her found constant welcome in her court. She spoke Italian and French as fluently as her mother-tongue. She was familiar with Ariosto and Tasso. Even amidst the affectation and love of anagrams and puerilities which sullied her later years, she listened with delight to the "Faery Queen," and found a smile for "Master Spenser" when he appeared in her presence. Her moral temper recalled in its strange contrasts the mixed blood within her veins. She was at once the daughter of Henry and of Anne

Boleyn. From her father she inherited her frank and hearty address, her love of popularity and of free intercourse with the people, her dauntless courage and her amazing self-confidence. Her harsh, manlike voice, her impetuous will, her pride, her furious outbursts of anger came to her with her Tudor blood. She rated great nobles as if they were schoolboys; she met the insolence of Essex with a box on the ear; she would break now and then into the gravest deliberations to swear at her ministers like a fishwife. But strangely in contrast with the violent outlines of her Tudor temper stood the sensuous, self-indulgent nature she derived from Anne Boleyn. Splendour and pleasure were with Elizabeth the very air she breathed. Her delight was to move in perpetual progresses from castle to castle through a series of gorgeous pageants, fanciful and extravagant as a caliph's dream. She loved gaiety and laughter and wit. A happy retort or a finished compliment never failed to win her favour. She hoarded jewels. Her dresses were innumerable. Her vanity remained, even to old age, the vanity of a coquette in her teens. No adulation was too fulsome for her, no flattery of her beauty too gross. "To see her was heaven," Hatton told her, "the lack of her was hell." She would play with her rings that her courtiers might note the delicacy of her hands; or dance a coranto that the French ambassador, hidden dexterously behind a curtain, might report her sprightliness to his master. Her levity, her frivolous laughter, her unwomanly jests gave colour to a thousand scandals. Her character, in fact, like her portraits, was utterly without shade. Of womanly reserve or self-

restraint she knew nothing. No instinct of delicacy veiled the voluptuous temper which had broken out in the romps of her girlhood and showed itself almost ostentatiously throughout her later life. Personal beauty in a man was a sure passport to her liking. She patted handsome young squires on the neck when they knelt to kiss her hand, and fondled her "sweet Robin," Lord Leicester, in the face of the court.

It was no wonder that the statesmen whom she outwitted held Elizabeth almost to the last to be little more than a frivolous woman, or that Philip of Spain wondered how "a wanton" could hold in check the policy of the Escurial. But the Elizabeth whom they saw was far from being all of Elizabeth. The wilfulness of Henry, the triviality of Anne Boleyn played over the surface of a nature hard as steel, a temper purely intellectual, the very type of reason untouched by imagination or passion. Luxurious and pleasure-loving as she seemed, Elizabeth lived simply and frugally, and she worked hard. Her vanity and caprice had no weight whatever with her in state affairs. The coquette of the presence-chamber became the coolest and hardest of politicians at the council-board. Fresh from the flattery of her courtiers, she would tolerate no flattery in the closet; she was herself plain and downright of speech with her counsellors, and she looked for a corresponding plainness of speech in return. If any trace of her sex lingered in her actual statesmanship, it was seen in the simplicity and tenacity of purpose that often underlies a woman's fluctuations of feeling. It was this in part which gave her her marked superiority over the states-

men of her time. No nobler group of ministers ever gathered round a council-board than those who gathered round the council-board of Elizabeth. But she was the instrument of none. She listened, she weighed, she used or put by the counsels of each in turn, but her policy as a whole was her own. It was a policy, not of genius, but of good sense. Her aims were simple and obvious: to preserve her throne, to keep England out of war, to restore civil and religious order. Something of womanly caution and timidity perhaps backed the passionless indifference with which she set aside the larger schemes of ambition which were ever opening before her eyes. She was resolute in her refusal of the Low Countries. She rejected with a laugh the offers of the Protestants to make her "head of the religion" and "mistress of the seas." But her amazing success in the end sprang mainly from this wise limitation of her aims. She had a finer sense than any of her counsellors of her real resources; she knew instinctively how far she could go, and what she could do. Her cold, critical intellect was never swayed by enthusiasm, or by panic, either to exaggerate or to underestimate her risks or her power.

Of political wisdom, indeed, in its larger and more generous sense, Elizabeth had little or none, but her political tact was unerring. She seldom saw her course at a glance, but she played with a hundred courses, fitfully and discursively, as a musician runs his fingers over the key-board, till she hit suddenly upon the right one. Her nature was essentially practical and of the present. She distrusted a plan in fact just in proportion to its speculative range, or its out-look into the

future. Her notion of statesmanship lay in watching how things turned out around her, and in seizing the moment for making the best of them. A policy of this limited, practical, tentative order was not only best suited to the England of her day, to its small resources, and the transitional character of its religious and political belief, but it was one eminently suited to Elizabeth's peculiar powers. It was a policy of detail, and in details her wonderful readiness and ingenuity found scope for their exercise. "No War, my lords," the Queen used to cry imperiously at the council-board, "No War!" but her hatred of war sprang less from her aversion to blood or to expense, real as was her aversion to both, than from the fact that peace left the field open to the diplomatic manœuvres and intrigues in which she excelled. Her delight in the consciousness of her ingenuity broke out in a thousand puckish freaks, freaks in which one can hardly see any purpose beyond the purpose of sheer mystification. She revelled in "bye-ways" and "crooked ways." She played with grave cabinets as a cat plays with a mouse, and with much of the same feline delight in the mere embarrassment of her victims. When she was weary of mystifying foreign statesmen she turned to find fresh sport in mystifying her own ministers. Had Elizabeth written the story of her reign she would have prided herself, not on the triumph of England or the ruin of Spain, but on the skill with which she had hoodwinked and outwitted every statesman in Europe, during fifty years. Nor was her trickery without political value. Ignoble, inexpressibly wearisome as the Queen's diplomacy seems to us now, tracing it as we do through a thousand despatches, it

succeeded in its main end. It gained time, and every year that was gained doubled Elizabeth's strength. Nothing is more revolting in the Queen, but nothing is more characteristic, than her shameless mendacity. It was an age of political lying, but in the profusion and recklessness of her lies Elizabeth stood without a peer in Christendom. A falsehood was to her simply an intellectual means of meeting a difficulty; and the ease with which she asserted or denied whatever suited her purpose was only equalled by the cynical indifference with which she met the exposure of her lies as soon as their purpose was answered. The same purely intellectual view of things showed itself in the dexterous use she made of her very faults. Her levity carried her gaily over moments of detection and embarrassment where better women would have died of shame. She screened her tentative and hesitating statesmanship under the natural timidity and vacillation of her sex. She turned her very luxury and sports to good account. There were moments of grave danger in her reign when the country remained indifferent to its perils, as it saw the Queen give her days to hawking and hunting, and her nights to dancing and plays. Her vanity and affectation, her womanly fickleness and caprice, all had their part in the diplomatic comedies she played with the successive candidates for her hand. If political necessities made her life a lonely one, she had at any rate the satisfaction of averting war and conspiracies by love sonnets and romantic interviews, or of gaining a year of tranquillity by the dexterous spinning out of a flirtation.

If in loftiness of aim her temper fell below many of the

tempers of her time, in the breadth of its range, in the universality of its sympathy it stood far above them all. Elizabeth could talk poetry with Spenser, and philosophy with Bruno; she could discuss Euphuism with Lyly, and enjoy the chivalry of Essex; she could turn from talk of the last fashions to pore with Cecil over despatches and treasury books; she could pass from tracking traitors with Walsingham to settle points of doctrine with Parker, or to calculate with Frobisher the chances of a northwest passage to the Indies. The versatility and many-sidedness of her mind enabled her to understand every phase of the intellectual movement of her day, and to fix by a sort of instinct on its higher representatives. But the greatness of the Queen rests above all on her power over her people. We have had grander and nobler rulers, but none so popular as Elizabeth. The passion of love, of loyalty, of admiration which finds its most perfect expression in the "Faery Queen," throbbed as intensely through the veins of her meanest subjects. To England, during her reign of half a century, she was a virgin and a Protestant Queen; and her immorality, her absolute want of religious enthusiasm, failed utterly to blur the brightness of the national ideal. Her worst acts broke fruitlessly against the general devotion. A Puritan, whose hand she cut off in a freak of tyrannous resentment, waved his hat with the hand that was left, and shouted "God save Queen Elizabeth!" Of her faults, indeed, England beyond the circle of her court knew little or nothing. The shiftings of her diplomacy were never seen outside the royal closet. The nation at large could only judge her foreign policy by its

main outlines, by its temperance and good sense, and above all by its success. But every Englishman was able to judge Elizabeth in her rule at home, in her love of peace, her instinct of order, the firmness and moderation of her government, the judicious spirit of conciliation and compromise among warring factions which gave the country an unexampled tranquillity at a time when almost every other country in Europe was torn with civil war. Every sign of the growing prosperity, the sight of London as it became the mart of the world, of stately mansions as they rose on every manor, told, and justly told, in Elizabeth's favour. In one act of her civil administration she showed the boldness and originality of a great ruler; for the opening of her reign saw her face the social difficulty which had so long impeded English progress, by the issue of a commission of inquiry which ended in the solution of the problem by the system of poor-laws. She lent a ready patronage to the new commerce; she considered its extension and protection as a part of public policy, and her statue in the centre of the London Exchange was a tribute on the part of the merchant class to the interest with which she watched and shared personally in its enterprises. Her thrift won a general gratitude. The memories of the Terror and of the Martyrs threw into bright relief the aversion from bloodshed which was conspicuous in her earlier reign, and never wholly wanting through its fiercer close. Above all there was a general confidence in her instinctive knowledge of the national temper. Her finger was always on the public pulse. She knew exactly when she could resist the feeling of her people, and when she

must give way before the new sentiment of freedom which her policy unconsciously fostered. But when she retreated, her defeat had all the grace of victory; and the frankness and unreserve of her surrender won back at once the love that her resistance had lost. Her attitude at home, in fact, was that of a woman whose pride in the well-being of her subjects, and whose longing for their favour, was the one warm touch in the coldness of her natural temper. If Elizabeth could be said to love anything, she loved England. "Nothing," she said to her first Parliament in words of unwonted fire, "nothing, no worldly thing under the sun, is so dear to me as the love and good-will of my subjects." And the love and good-will which were so dear to her she fully won.

She clung perhaps to her popularity the more passionately that it hid in some measure from her the terrible loneliness of her life. She was the last of the Tudors, the last of Henry's children; and her nearest relatives were Mary Stuart and the House of Suffolk, one the avowed, the other the secret claimant of her throne. Among her mother's kindred she found but a single cousin. Whatever womanly tenderness she had, wrapt itself around Leicester; but a marriage with Leicester was impossible, and every other union, could she even have bent to one, was denied to her by the political difficulties of her position. The one cry of bitterness which burst from Elizabeth revealed her terrible sense of the solitude of her life. "The Queen of Scots," she cried at the birth of James, "has a fair son, and I am but a barren stock." But the loneliness of her position only

reflected the loneliness of her nature. She stood utterly apart from the world around her, sometimes above it, sometimes below it, but never of it. It was only on its intellectual side that Elizabeth touched the England of her day. All its moral aspects were simply dead to her. It was a time when men were being lifted into nobleness by the new moral energy which seemed suddenly to pulse through the whole people, when honour and enthusiasm took colours of poetic beauty, and religion became a chivalry. But the finer sentiments of the men around her touched Elizabeth simply as the fair tints of a picture would have touched her. She made her market with equal indifference out of the heroism of William of Orange or the bigotry of Philip. The noblest aims and lives were only counters on her board. She was the one soul in her realm whom the news of St. Bartholomew stirred to no thirst for vengeance; and while England was thrilling with its triumph over the Armada, its Queen was coolly grumbling over the cost, and making her profit out of the spoiled provisions she had ordered for the fleet that saved her. To the voice of gratitude, indeed, she was for the most part deaf. She accepted services such as were never rendered to any other English sovereign without a thought of return. Walsingham spent his fortune in saving her life and her throne, and she left him to die a beggar. But, as if by a strange irony, it was to this very want of sympathy that she owed some of the grander features of her character. If she was without love she was without hate. She cherished no petty resentments; she never stooped to envy or suspicion of the men who served her. She was indifferent to abuse. Her

good-humour was never ruffled by the charges of wantonness and cruelty with which the Jesuits filled every Court in Europe. She was insensible to fear. Her life became at last the mark for assassin after assassin, but the thought of peril was the one hardest to bring home to her. Even when the Catholic plots broke out in her very household she would listen to no proposals for the removal of Catholics from her court.

It was this moral isolation which told so strangely both for good and for evil on her policy towards the Church. The young Queen was not without a sense of religion. But she was almost wholly destitute of spiritual emotion, or of any consciousness of the vast questions with which theology strove to deal. While the world around her was being swayed more and more by theological beliefs and controversies, Elizabeth was absolutely untouched by them. She was a child of the Italian Renascence, rather than of the New Learning of Colet or Erasmus, and her attitude towards the enthusiasm of her time was that of Lorenzo de' Medici towards Savonarola. Her mind was unruffled by the spiritual problems which were vexing the minds around her; to Elizabeth, indeed, they were not only unintelligible, they were a little ridiculous. She had the same intellectual contempt for the superstition of the Romanist as for the bigotry of the Protestant. While she ordered Catholic images to be flung into the fire, she quizzed the Puritans as "brethren in Christ." But she had no sort of religious aversion from either Puritan or Papist. The Protestants grumbled at the Catholic nobles whom she admitted to the presence. The

Catholics grumbled at the Protestant statesmen who she called to her council-board. But to Elizabeth the arrangement was the most natural thing in the world. She looked at theological differences in a purely political light. She agreed with Henry IV. that a kingdom was well worth a mass. It seemed an obvious thing to her to hold out hopes of conversion as a means of deceiving Philip, or to gain a point in negotiation by restoring the crucifix to her chapel. The first interest in her own mind was the interest of public order, and she never could understand how it could fail to be first in every one's mind.

The triumph of Mountjoy flung its lustre over the last days of Elizabeth, but no outer triumph could break the gloom which gathered round the dying Queen. Lonely as she had always been, her loneliness deepened as she drew towards the grave. The statesmen and warriors of her earlier days had dropped one by one from her council-board; and their successors were watching her last moments, and intriguing for favour in the coming reign. Her favourite, Lord Essex, was led into an insane outbreak of revolt, which brought him to the block. The old splendour of her court waned, and disappeared. Only officials remained about her, "the other of the Council and nobility estrange themselves by all occasions." As she passed along in her progresses, the people whose applause she courted remained cold and silent. The temper of the age, in fact, was changing, and isolating her as it changed. Her own England, the England which had grown up around her, serious, moral, prosaic, shrank coldly from this brilliant, fanciful, unscruplous child of earth

and the Renascence. She had enjoyed life as the men of her day enjoyed it, and now that they were gone she clung to it with a fierce tenacity. She hunted, she danced, she jested with her young favourites, she coquetted, and scolded, and frolicked at sixty-seven as she had done at thirty. "The Queen," wrote a courtier a few months before her death, "was never so gallant these many years, nor so set upon jollity." She persisted, in spite of opposition, in her gorgeous progresses from country-house to country-house. She clung to business as of old, and rated in her usual fashion "one who minded not to giving up some matter of account." But death crept on. Her face became haggard, and her frame shrank almost to a skeleton. At last her taste for finery disappeared, and she refused to change her dresses for a week together. A strange melancholy settled down on her: "she held in her hand," says one who saw her in her last days, "a golden cup, which she often put to her lips: but in truth her heart seemed too full to need more filling." Gradually her mind gave way. She lost her memory, the violence of her temper became unbearable, her very courage seemed to forsake her. She called for a sword to lie constantly beside her, and thrust it from time to time through the arras, as if she heard murderers stirring there. Food and rest became alike distasteful. She sate day and night propped up with pillows on a stool, her finger on her lip, her eyes fixed on the floor, without a word. If she once broke the silence, it was with a flash of her old queenliness. When Robert Cecil asserted that she "must" go to bed, the word roused her like a trumpet. "Must!" she exclaimed; "is *must* a word to

be addressed to princes? Little man, little man! thy father, if he had been alive, durst not have used that word." Then, as her anger spent itself, she sank into her old dejection. "Thou art so presumptuous," she said, "because thou knowest I shall die." She rallied once more when the ministers beside her bed named Lord Beauchamp, the heir to the Suffolk claim, as a possible successor. "I will have no rogue's son," she cried hoarsely, "in my seat." But she gave no sign, save a motion of the head, at the mention of the King of Scots. She was in fact fast becoming insensible; and early the next morning the life of Elizabeth, a life so great, so strange and lonely in its greatness, passed quietly away.

LA MARQUISE DE MONTESPAN.

LA MARQUISE DE MONTESPAN

(1641—1707)

ADOLPHE DUPLESSIS

FRANÇOISE-ATHÉNAÏS DE ROCHECHOUART DE MORTEMART, Marquise de Montespan, born in 1641, was the second daughter of Gabriel de Rochechouart, first Duc de Mortemart, known at first by the name of Mademoiselle de Tonnay-Charente. She was married in 1663 to Henri-Louis de Pardaillan de Gondrin, Marquis de Montespan, of an illustrious family of Gascony, and through the influence of Monsieur, to whom he was attached, he obtained for her the post of a maid of honour to the Queen. The Marquise de Montespan appeared at Court with everything that was necessary to attract attention and to please. To the most overwhelming beauty was united the quickest, most delicate, and best cultivated of minds, the mind that was inherited like the personal beauty in her family, and that gave rise to the saying: *"The Mortemart wit and conversation."*

Entirely absorbed by his love for the Duchesse de la Vallière, Louis XIV. did not at first pay any attention to Madame de Montespan; but when the latter became associated with the Duchess, the King, meeting her often in her apartments as well as the Queen's, was struck by her

piquant, natural, and playful conversation; by degrees he allowed himself to be charmed by the beautiful Marquise, who was sarcastic without being malicious, a delightful story-teller, who could cleverly mimic those at whose expense she wished to amuse the monarch.

When the Marquise perceived that the power, which she had not at first desired, over the mind of Louis XIV. was gradually extending to his heart, she took, or at least she is said to have taken, measures, which dismiss the idea that she had planned to inspire the Prince with a guilty passion. She informed her husband of the King's love and earnestly begged him to take her to their country estates, so as to give that young and still weak flame time to cool. Those who pass by this fact admit that the Marquis de Montespan could have removed his wife without any opposition from the King, but that he hoped to derive from this favour advantages, which, after all, escaped him and occasioned his spite and passion. He behaved himself thereafter in public in such a scandalous manner with regard to Madame de Montespan that he drew upon himself the order to go and live on his estates until his death. At the period that he treated his wife so imprudently, she was still virtuous; and this harsh conduct doubtless contributed to her fall. It was in 1670, when the Court accompanied to the frontier Madame, who was charged with the negotiations with her brother, Charles II., that Madame de Montespan's favour burst forth. She made part of the journey in the coach of the King and Queen; and, when she got into her own, four body-guards stood at the curtains.

Louis XIV repeated for her children what he had done for those of Madame de la Vallière. The eldest, the Duc du Maine, was legitimated in 1673 by an Act of Parliament, in which there was no mention of the child's mother. The others were legitimated successively and these children obtained great wealth at a later period.

The empire that the proud mistress held over the King's heart soon made her desire to obtain influence and authority in political affairs. The favourite whom she succeeded had had the wisdom not to desire this; but the difference between the character and passion of the two mistresses was very great. Madame de Montespan's ambition was satisfied: she had so many ways of influencing the King that the ministers and courtiers vied with each other in yielding to her. Louis XIV. himself, deceived by the playfulness and apparent heedlessness of the Marquise, exhibited her to his ministers as a child; and this child learned all the State secrets. They even asked, and more than once they followed her advice. What flattered Madame de Montespan still more in her new estate was the ease with which she was able to satisfy her intense love of magnificence. For several years the court of Louis XIV. belonged entirely to the Marquise; the momentary wanderings of the King's heart did not prevent his return to his seductive mistress. But with time his passion cooled; Madame de Montespan was also seized with remorse. The exhortations of Madame de Maintenon (*q. v.*), supported by those of others opposed to the adroit favourite, struck the monarch with their justice. This was the cause of the jealousy between Montespan and

Maintenon. The King himself was forced to intervene in their quarrels and reconcile them only to see them fall out again the next day. An incident interrupted these altercations, and the Prince for whom two women were disputing gave himself up entirely to a third, Fontanges. The reign of the latter, however, was short, she dying in 1681. To the mistake of exhibiting an indecent joy at this death, Madame de Montespan added that of mixing in intrigues to deprive Madame de Maintenon of the King's esteem; but they met with no success. There was only one thing left,—retreat; and she could not make up her mind to this. At last, in 1686, Louis XIV., shocked to see that Madame de Montespan was still hoping to win him back, had her notified that he would have no further dealings whatsoever with her and that he would send her to Paris if she continued her importunities. Madame de Maintenon was entrusted with this mission, and this selection could only render the blow all the harder. At this period, there was nothing to hold Madame de Montespan to the Court: the Queen had been dead for several years, and the post of superintendant of her household, which had kept the Marquise by her side, no longer existed. She stayed for some time longer, but, finding nothing to support her hopes, she felt that there was nothing left to do but to retire. Moreover, this resolution had become necessary, and they had had the harshness to have it suggested by the Duc du Maine.

It took Madame de Montespan some time to accustom herself to the kind of void in which she found herself after

leaving the brilliant court over which she had reigned for so many years. She carried her weariness into various places, her estates, the Eaux de Bourbon, and elsewhere. At last Religion offered her a refuge, and she gave herself up to it entirely. She retired into the community of the Filles de St. Joseph, which she had enlarged and enriched. She wrote to the Marquis de Montespan in the most submissive terms, offering to go anywhere he might indicate. The so long outraged husband replied that he wanted neither to see her, nor to prescribe any course, nor ever to hear her name uttered, and he died without pardoning her.

Madame de Montespan had always taken pleasure in relieving indigence; and the last years of this life, formerly so sensual and luxurious, saw only every kind of privation. She spent every moment in working and making others work for the poor and the people about her; she paid numerous pensions to nobles who had no fortune; she dowered orphans, and, in order to satisfy so much munificence, she imposed constant sacrifices upon herself. Finally, she tried to make reparation for her errors by submitting to frequent fasts and cruel mortifications, and this zeal, which might be considered excessive, lasted until the end of her life. But the austerities of penitence did not interfere in the least with her taste for travel: by that means she endeavoured to calm her natural restlessness and to quench the attachment which she long felt to the Court. Saint-Simon says: "One might have thought that she hoped to cheat Death by changing her abode so often." She was always saying she was ill without really being so, and she con-

stantly showed the most lively fear of death. Her room was always fully illuminated all night and people always sat beside her so that she might not find herself alone in case her sleep was interrupted. Always employed in expiating her past faults, she recovered the feelings of a good mother towards the Duc d'Antin, her only child by the Marquis de Montespan, for whom she had long shown great indifference. She was very fond of her other children, especially the Comte de Toulouse, who deserved his father's affection and was always a tender and respectful son to his mother.

At the beginning of 1707, Madame de Montespan went to Bourbon l'Archambault. Although her health did not seem to be bad, a presentiment which she did not conceal led her to pay in advance for two years the pensions that she allowed to so many people. The event justified her generous foresight. At the end of May, she was attacked by the malady that took her to the tomb. Although seventy years of age, she had preserved almost all her beauty. Such was the end of this woman so remarkable for her charms, her wit, and the part she played during a portion of the most brilliant reign of the French monarchy.

THE DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND.

THE DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND

(1640—1709)

MRS. JAMESON

SIR WILLIAM VILLIERS, descended from the eldest branch of the house of Villiers (the younger branch becoming Dukes of Buckingham), succeeded his uncle, Oliver St. John, in the title of Viscount Grandison, in the Kingdom of Ireland. On the breaking out of the civil wars, he, with all his family, adhered to the King's party, and distinguished himself by his devoted loyalty and chivalrous bravery. At the siege of Bristol, in 1643, he was desperately wounded, and, being carried to Oxford, died there a few days afterwards, at the age of thirty. He married Mary, third daughter of Paul, Viscount Bayning, by whom he left an only daughter and heiress, Barbara Villiers, afterwards Duchess of Cleveland.

Of the early life and education of this too celebrated woman, I have not been able to collect any authentic information. She married, at the age of eighteen, Roger Palmer, Esq., a gentleman of fortune and a loyal adherent of the exiled King. Her first acquaintance with Charles probably commenced in Holland, whither she accompanied her husband in 1659, when he carried to the King a considerable sum of money, to aid in his restoration, and

assisted him also by his personal services. But her connection with Charles cannot be traced with any certainty before the very day of his entrance into London: on the evening of that very day, Charles, instead of sleeping in the palace of his ancestors, to which he had just been restored, skulked away privately to the house of Sir Samuel Moreland, at Vauxhall, where he had an assignation with Mrs. Palmer.

That an accomplished Prince, in the prime of life, skilled in all the arts that ensnare her sex—the sovereign for whose sake her father had fought and bled; whom she had just seen restored—*miraculously* restored, as it was then believed, to the throne of his fathers, welcomed to his capital with almost delirious joy, and who, in such a moment, threw himself and his new-found kingdom at her feet, should have conquered the heart and triumphed over the virtue of a woman so vain and volatile—is not marvellous: she was only nineteen, and thrown by the blind confidence or time-serving carelessness of her husband into the very way of temptation. Thus far her frailty, if not excusable, might have been pardoned, if the end had not proved that personal affection for the King had little to do with her lapse from virtue, and that, in short, she was more of a Montespan than a La Vallière—more of an Alice Pierce than a Jane Shore.

In a few months after the restoration, Palmer was created an Irish peer, with the title of Earl of Castlemaine. He, meekest of men, was, or affected to be, a little sulky and restive at first under his new dignities, but means were soon found to pacify him; and he afterwards submitted to

the coronet, and other honours which his beautiful wife showered on his head, with a spirit of philosophy and resignation which was quite edifying.

The passion of the King for Lady Castlemaine, and her influence over him, were at their height at the time that his marriage with Catherine of Portugal was, from political motives, resolved on. When the Queen's arrival at Portsmouth was announced in London, Charles was supping at Lady Castlemaine's house in the Strand. Bonfires had been lighted, in token of respect and rejoicing, before every door in the street except hers—an omission which did not pass unobserved; nor did she attempt to conceal her despair, when the King left her to meet his bride. It was probably sincere; for she had as much reason to dread, as all good men had to hope for, the influence of a young and beloved Queen. Unhappily her fears and others' hopes proved groundless: the King could not break the fetters which her charms and her imperious temper had flung round him, and the Queen had not beauty and tact enough to win him from her rival.

Catherine had arrived in England with a fixed resolution not to admit Lady Castlemaine into her presence—"her mother," she said, "had enjoined her not to do so"; but the King had determined otherwise; and the gay courtiers, who had the most influence over his mind, were precisely those who had everything to hope from the misrule of Lady Castlemaine and nothing to expect from the countenance of Catherine. Lady Castlemaine was created one of the ladies of the bedchamber, and soon after lodged in Whitehall,

where she occupied apartments immediately over those of the King.

From this time may be dated the absolute power which this haughty and abandoned woman exercised over the easy-tempered Charles—an influence never exercised but for her own aggrandisement and his dishonour, or the ruin of his best friends and most faithful servants. In her chamber and among the profligate crew who surrounded her, was prepared the plot against the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, which ended in the disgrace and banishment of that great nobleman, the earliest and best friend of her father. When he returned from Whitehall, after resigning the seals, she jumped out of bed in her night-dress, to look down upon him as he passed, and stood upon her balcony, abusing him loudly and in the coarsest terms her vulgar malice could suggest. When she quarrelled with the great Duke of Ormond, who had offended her in many ways, but chiefly by refusing to sanction her enormous drains upon the Irish treasury, she reviled him, swore at him, and finally told him "she hoped to see him hanged." To which the Duke replied, with a grave humour becoming his character, that "far from wishing her ladyship's days shortened in return, his greatest desire was to see her grow old."

But her countenance was always extended to those who flattered her passions, ministered to her avarice, or were subservient to her pleasures. She indeed gave encouragement to Dryden in the beginning of his literary career; but it seems to have been more through contradiction than any perception of merit, that she persisted in patronising

his first and worst play, after it had been summarily *executed.*

The sums which this harpy contrived to appropriate from the funds of the state almost exceed belief. She was, to use Burnet's coarse expression in speaking of her, "enormously ravenous"; it was, however, rather rapacity than avarice; for what was obtained unworthily, was lavished as extravagantly. Besides a grant of £5,322 a year out of the post-office to her and her heirs, she had twenty thousand a year out of the customs. What sums were occasionally paid to her out of the revenues of Ireland cannot be ascertained: besides this income, immense in those days, she had at different times gifts in money, jewels, and plate, to an incredible amount, and this at the time when the King's household servants were cursing him because they had not bread to eat, and he himself wanted linen, and was stinted in writing paper!

Berkshire House was purchased for her by the King, in 1668; and as it was of great extent, she added to her income by converting part of it into separate houses and letting them; but all was too little to supply her monstrous expenditure. Among her other extravagances was the vice of gaming: in one night she lost at basset £25,000, and was accustomed to stake one thousand, and fifteen hundred pounds at a cast.

As the fair Castlemaine was one of those ladies who would "whisk the stars out of their spheres" rather than lose one iota of their will, it may be imagined that her connection with the King was not one long summer's day,

all serenity and sunshine. In fact, not satisfied with "nodding him from the council-board" whenever the whim seized her, she gave way to such inexplicable caprices, and, upon the slightest cause, to such bursts of tempestuous passion, that she sometimes threw the whole Court into an uproar, and drove the poor King half-distracted. It is observable, that as soon as she was well assured of her power over Charles, and understood his character, she never attempted to carry any point by tenderness or cajolery, but by absenting herself from Court, or by direct violence; she hectored him, as Pepys says, out of his wits.

> "And, with bent lowering brows, as she would threat,
> She scold' and frown'd with froward countenance,
> Unworthy of fair lady's comely governance."
>
> *Spenser.*

Charles, wearied by the dint of her vituperative tongue, and pained by the disagreeable sight of so beautiful a face deformed by demon passions, hastened to relieve his eyes and ears by granting her demands, however exorbitant. At times, however, being driven past the bounds of patience, he would make an attempt at resistance, which was sure to end in his discomfiture. Some instances on record of her coarse manners and termagant temper are ludicrous, and some disgusting.

The last and most tempestuous of these disgraceful scenes ended in her being raised to the dignity of duchess. "In consideration of her noble descent, her father's death in the service of the Crown, and by reason" (as the letters patent set forth) "of her own *personal virtues*," she was created

Baroness of Nonsuch, Countess of Southampton, and Duchess of Cleveland. The title of Southampton must have doubly gratified her, as having been that of her old enemy, the excellent Lord Southampton, who had frequently excited her utmost displeasure, by refusing to put his seal as treasurer to her exorbitant grants of money, etc.

After this last rupture, and her elevation of rank, the Duchess withdrew from the Court, though she still occasionally appeared there: her influence over the King did not entirely cease till the reign of the Duchess of Portsmouth began, but she was no longer all powerful; and gradually as she debased herself more and more by her excesses, she sank into neglect and contempt. Pepys alludes in his *Diary* to a quarrel about his time between Lady Castlemaine and the Duchess of Richmond (the predecessor to the fair Stewart in that title), which threw the whole Court into confusion; "wherein the Duchess of Richmond did call my Lady Castlemaine Jane Shore, and hoped she should live to see her come to the same end." There was in truth some poetical justice in the catastrophe of the Duchess of Cleveland, though the Duchess of Richmond had not the comfort of living to witness it. On the death of the Earl of Castlemaine, in 1703, she married a man of desperate fortune and profligate habits, well known by the name of Beau Fielding, and unequalled in those days for the beauty of his person.* Fielding had married her

* See *The Tatler*, No. 50, for the *History of Orlando the Fair*, *i. e.*, the above-mentioned Beau Fielding; it is from the pen of Swift.

for the sake of her money; and when she either could not or would not, any longer supply his extravagances, he so barbarously ill-treated her, that she was obliged to have recourse to a magistrate for protection against his outrages. Fortunately for her, it was discovered that he had a former wife living, a low woman, who had cheated him as he had cheated all the rest of her sex. He was prosecuted for bigamy, found guilty, but pardoned by Queen Anne. His conviction relieved the Duchess from his brutality, but she did not long survive it: she died of dropsy at her house at Chiswick, October 9, 1709, miserable, contemned, and neglected; leaving a name more fitted to "point a moral" than to "adorn a tale."

The Duchess of Cleveland was the mother of six children, three sons and three daughters. Charles Fitzroy, her eldest son by the King, was born in 1662, and created, during the lifetime of his mother, Baron Newberry, Earl of Chichester, and Duke of Southampton; on her death he succeeded to the title of Duke of Cleveland, in which he was succeeded by his son William, after whose death in 1774, the title became extinct, and has not since been revived.

The beauty of the Duchess of Cleveland was of that splendid and commanding character that dazzles rather than interests; it was, however, perfect in its kind. At a time when she was most unpopular, and her charms and excesses were creating disturbances in the Court and disaffection in the country, she went to Bartholomew Fair to view "the rare puppet show of Patient Grizzle," (by which, it is to be hoped, she was greatly edified). The

rabble, recognising her equipage, followed it with hisses and curses; but when she stepped out, and looked round in all the proud consciousness of irresistible beauty, the people, struck with admiration, changed their curses into blessings "on her handsome face," though it had helped to undo a nation. The picture at Windsor represents her as Pallas, or Bellona: the last is certainly the more appropriate character; it is full of the imperious expression of the original. The face is perfectly beautiful, the rich red lips are curled with arrogance and "womanish disdain," and the eyes look from under their drooping lids with a certain fierceness of expression; the action, the attitude, the accompaniments, are all those of a virago; she grasps the spear with the air of an all-conquering beauty, and leans on her shield as if she disdained to use it; while the grand tempestuous sky in the background, with broken gleams of light flashing across it, is in admirable keeping with the whole.

MADAME ROLAND

(1754—1793)

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE

IT was impossible that the name of Madame Roland should long escape the resentment of the people. That name alone composed an entire party. The soul of the Gironde, this woman might one day prove a very Nemesis, if permitted to survive those illustrious individuals who had preceded her to the grave.

Among such of the Girondists as survived, it was deemed necessary to strike terror by destroying their idol—while the memory of the dead was degraded by its association with the popular execration excited by a female odious to the people, and a supposed foe to liberty. Such were the motives which induced the Commune and Jacobins to demand that Madame Roland should be brought to trial.

The Committee of Public Safety, the ever-ready (though sometimes pained) executor of the wishes of the populace, inscribed the name of Madame Roland on a list presented every evening to Fouquier Tinville, and which Robespierre signed with visible disquietude. During the early part of his abode in Paris, the deputy of Arras, then but little known, had been a constant visitor at Madame Roland's house. And when the Constituent Assembly wounded the pride

MADAME ROLAND.

and disdained the words of Robespierre, Madame Roland discerned his genius, honoured his pertinacity, and encouraged his despised eloquence. The recollection of this glanced across the mind of Robespierre, as he signed an order for her appearing before a tribunal, which he well knew was the same thing as signing a death-warrant. Madame Roland and Robespierre had commenced their Revolutionary career together, and by the workings of that same Revolution, the one had attained unlimited power, while the other had been precipitated into the very depths of adversity, and it was in all probability, to the encouragement bestowed on his abilities by Madame Roland, that Robespierre owed the elevated position he now occupied and the power it gave him of decreeing life or death to his early friend.

On the 31st of May, Madame Roland was committed to the prison of l'Abbaye. It is the lot of some individuals to attract a greater degree of interest and curiosity on the part of posterity than the records of an empire, for such persons have united in their situation and feelings—their alternate rise and fall—all the vicissitudes, catastrophes, glories, and misfortunes of the time in which they lived. Madame Roland was of this class. Her enthusiasm and passion, her illusions, her martyrdom, her unextinguishable hope for the future, amid the actual discouragement of the present, rendered her, even in the very depths of her dungeon, a living personification of the Revolution.

Separated from the world, torn from her father, husband, and child, she bathed in floods of inward tears the ardours

of an imagination whose fires, though smouldering, were not extinct.

The gaolers of the Abbaye sought by every means a prison afforded to soften Madame Roland's captivity. Some beings can only be persecuted from a distance—beauty subdues and disarms all who approach it.

Unknown to the Commissioners, Madame Roland was placed in a chamber into which a ray of light could find entrance. She was even indulged with flowers, of which she was so passionately fond; in the days of her happiness it had been her delight to surround herself with these lovely productions of Nature, and she had ever esteemed them among her choicest pleasures. Climbing and leafy plants were twined round the iron bars of her window, in order that by concealing the thick grating the prisoner might dream she was free. A few of her particular friends were allowed to visit and converse with her. Books were supplied, and thus she was enabled to pursue her favourite studies.

She was removed to the Conciergerie. There, instead of losing strength or courage, it appeared as though both were increased. As she approached her end, her mind, her language, and her features seemed to take the impress of one appointed to fill some great and lofty destiny. During the few days she passed in the Conciergerie, she spread, by her presence among the numerous prisoners there, an enthusiasm and contempt of death that elevated the most abject and depressed. The approach to the scaffold seemed to give a more divine character to her beauty; the length of

her captivity, the calm consciousness with which she recognised the hopelessness of her situation, her voice tremulous with the emotion she forbade to vent itself in tears—gave to her words that thrilling interest that finds its way to every heart. She conversed at the grate with the numerous members of her party, who, like herself, had found their way to the Conciergerie. Standing on a stone bench, which elevated her a little above the ground, and clasping her fingers round the iron bars that separated the opening between the cloister and the court, she found her tribune in her prison, and her audience in her companions to the scaffold.

The examination and trial of Madame Roland was but a repetition of those charges against the Gironde with which every harangue of the Jacobin party was filled. She was reproached with being the wife of Roland, and the friend of his accomplices. With a proud look of triumph Madame Roland admitted her guilt in both instances, spoke of her husband with tenderness, of her friends with respect, and of herself with dignified modesty; but borne down by the clamours of the court whenever she gave vent to her indignation against her persecutors, she ceased speaking amid the threats and invectives of her auditors. The people were at that period permitted to take a fearful and leading part in the dialogue between the judges and accused; they even permitted to persons tried to address the court or compel their silence; the very verdict rested with them.

Madame Roland saw herself sentenced to death with the air of one who saw in her condemnation merely her title to

immortality. She rose, and slightly bowing to her judges, said, with a bitter and ironical smile, "I thank you for considering me worthy to share the fate of the good and great men you have murdered!" She flew down the steps of the Conciergerie with the rapid swiftness of a child about to attain some long-desired object: the end and aim of her desires was death. As she passed along the corridor, where all the prisoners had assembled to greet her return, she looked at them smilingly, and drawing her right hand across her throat, made a sign expressive of cutting off a head. This was her only farewell; it was tragic as her destiny, joyous as her deliverance; and well was it understood by those who saw it. Many who were incapable of weeping for their own fate shed tears of unfeigned sorrow for hers.

On that day a greater number than usual of carts laden with victims rolled onwards toward the scaffold. Madame Roland was placed in the last, beside a weak and infirm old man, named Lamarche, once director of the manufactory of Assignats. She wore a white robe, as a symbol of her innocence, of which she was anxious to convince the people; her magnificent hair, black and glossy as a raven's wing, fell in thick masses almost to her knees; her complexion, purified by her long captivity, and now glowing under the influence of a sharp, frosty, November day, bloomed with all the freshness of early youth. Her eyes were full of expression; her whole countenance seemed radiant with glory, while a movement between pity and contempt agitated her lips. A crowd followed them uttering the

coarsest threats and most revolting expressions. "To the guillotine! to the guillotine!" exclaimed the female part of the rabble. "I am going to the guillotine," replied Madame Roland, "a few moments and I shall be there; but those who send me thither will not be long ere they follow me. I go innocent, but they will come stained with blood, and you who applaud our execution, will then applaud theirs with equal zeal." Sometimes she would turn away her head that she might not appear to hear the insults with which she was assailed, and lean with almost filial tenderness over the aged partner of her execution. The poor old man wept bitterly, she kindly and cheeringly encouraged him to bear up with firmness, and to suffer with resignation. She even tried to enliven the dreary journey they were performing together by little attempts at cheerfulness, and at length succeeded in winning a smile from her fellow-sufferer.

A colossal statue of Liberty, composed of clay, like the liberty of the time, then stood in the middle of the Place de la Concorde, on the spot now occupied by the Obelisk; the scaffold was erected beside this statue. Upon arriving there, Madame Roland descended from the cart in which she had been driven. Just as the executioner had seized her arm to enable her to be the first to mount to the guillotine, she displayed one of those noble and tender considerations for others that only a woman's heart could conceive, or put into practice at such a moment. "Stay!" said she, momentarily resisting the man's grasp, "I have only one favour to ask, and that is not for myself. I beseech you to grant

it to me." Then turning to the old man, she said: "Do you precede me to the scaffold; to see my blood flow would be making you suffer the bitterness of death twice over. I must spare you the pain of witnessing my punishment." The executioner allowed this arrangement to be made.

After the execution of Lamarche, which she heard without changing colour, Madame Roland stepped lightly up to the scaffold, and bowing before the statue of Liberty, as though to do homage to a power for whom she was about to die, exclaimed, "O Liberty! Liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name." She then resigned herself to the hands of the executioner, and in a few seconds her head fell into the basket placed to receive it.

Thus perished a woman whose earliest and fondest dream had been the Revolution, and who had created in the mind of her aged partner a hatred for royalty resembling her own; who had communicated her feelings to a set of young, eloquent, and enthusiastic men, attached to antique theories, and who found in the lips and eyes of their goddess a species of endless adoration. The pure and involuntary affection with which her beauty and genius inspired them was the magic circle that retained around *her* so many superior men, who were prevented by various differences of opinion from preserving the same bond of union when beyond her influence; they were spell-bound by her talents, and, highly imaginative themselves, placed their whole confidence in the imagination of their idol, who thus became their oracle as well.

She led them on till one after the other perished on the

scaffold, where she followed them, and the spirit of the Gironde departed forever, with the last breath exhaled from the lips of Madame Roland, who bore then the same resemblance to the Republic she will ever preserve in the eyes of posterity: like it she was premature and ideal—beautiful to view, eloquent to listen to, but her footsteps were marked with the blood of her friends, and her head fell beneath the same sword that had immolated so many others in the sight of a people who no longer acknowledged her. Her body, the idol of so many hearts, was thrown into the common fosse at Clamart.

LADY HAMILTON

(1764—1815)

JOHN PAGET

ON the 26th of April, 1764, at Preston, in Lancaster a girl was born of poor parents, of the name of Lyons. If a fairy had sat by the cradle of that child and promised her matchless beauty and mental endowments of the highest order—had told her that all that wealth could purchase should be lavished upon her; that princes and nobles, poets and painters, should hang upon the tones of her voice and the smiles that played round her lips; that she should go forth to the fairest of lands, whose Queen should select her for her most intimate and cherished friend; that she should reign absolute in the heart of one whose name filled all tongues, and that upon her the destinies of the world should depend;—and if another voice had then whispered, "All this shall be so unto thee, but thy fame shall be blasted; thy name shall be spoken with bated breath as a word of shame; foul crimes shall be falsely charged against thee, and, for thy sake, against him who shall love thee as only hearts as great and generous as his can love; obloquy shall be heaped upon thy head, and thou shalt die an outcast in a foreign land, lonely, forlorn, and deserted;" such a prophecy would not have equalled in strangeness the real events of the life of that child.

LADY HAMILTON.

The father of Emma Lyons died whilst she was an infant, and upon his death her mother removed from Preston to the village of Hawarden in Flintshire. Here at a very early age she was engaged as a nursery-maid in the family of a Mr. Thomas who resided in that village, and who was brother-in-law to the well-known Alderman Boydell. Her next engagement was in a similar capacity in the family of Dr. Budd, one of the physicians to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, who resided in Chatham Place, Blackfriars. This fact is mentioned by Dr. Pettigrew in his *Memoirs of Lord Nelson,* and as he was personally acquainted with Dr. Budd, the correctness of his information may, no doubt, be relied upon. She passed from his service into that of a tradesman in St. James's Market; and afterwards seems to have resided some time as a kind of humble companion with a lady of fashion, whose attention had been accidentally attracted by her remarkable beauty. It was during her residence with this lady that she appears to have first had the opportunity of acquiring the rudiments of those accomplishments for which she afterwards became so remarkable.

Up to this period Emma Lyons maintained a spotless reputation. Accident and her own kindness of heart now, however, occasioned her introduction to Captain, afterwards Admiral Payne, a distinguished officer. A relation or acquaintance, a native of Wales, had been impressed in the Thames, and to Captain Payne she applied for his release. The Captain became enamoured, pressed his suit, and prevailed. She became his mistress, and retreat in such a path being next to impossible, she subsequently formed a similar

connection with Sir Henry Featherstonehaugh of Up Park in Sussex. We would willingly pass rapidly over this part of her life, but the tale, though sad, must be told. Few who consider what were the temptations to which she must have been exposed, the lax manners of the day, her youth, her wonderful beauty, and the delight which a girl of her mental capacity must have felt in the society of men of intellect and education, will be disposed to pass a severe judgment upon her.

It has been confidently asserted that at this time she became connected with the infamous empiric, Dr. Graham; that she was the woman who, under the name of "Hebe Vestina," bore a part in his exhibition; and that it was to this circumstance that she owed her introduction to Romney, and her employment as a model by Reynolds, Hopner, and other celebrated artists.

It is with her introduction to Romney that the public interest of Lady Hamilton's life commences. It is impossible to gaze on the face so familiar to every one, and which owes its immortality to his pencil, without feelings of deep emotion. The charm consists not in beauty of feature, marvellous though that beauty is. There beams in those eyes, and plays around those lips, the power of fascination which, a few years later, brought princes, statesmen, and heroes to worship at her feet.

Marvellous and inscrutable are the ways by which "Providence doth shape our ends"! Had that face been less beautiful, had the heart of its possessor been less brave and faithful, had she lacked courage or promptitude,—or,

strange as it may sound, had she been less frail, had she possessed fewer virtues or fewer faults,—the whole course of history might have been changed, and the Nile, and even Trafalgar, have had no place in the annals of England.

It has been repeatedly asserted that Emma Harte (for such was the name by which at this time she was known), was the servant, the model, and the mistress of Romney. This story will be found, on investigation, just as groundless as the grosser one of her connection with the quack Graham. At the time of her introduction to Romney, Emma Harte was living with the Honourable C. Greville, a young man of high family and position; she resided with him for six or seven years—his wife in everything except in legal title to the name; and his letters show that, long after the termination of that connection, he retained feelings of warm and respectful affection for her. Romney was, at this time, long past middle life. That he, like his friend Hayley, the biographer of Cowper, conceived a romantic attachment to the beautiful subject of his pencil is abundantly shown by his letters. The morbid tendencies of Romney's mind, which a few years later developed themselves into evident insanity, are well known. "The divine lady," as he calls her, was the object of sentimental and distant adoration, and never did devout worshipper pay more precious homage at the shrine of his idol. He painted as many as twenty-three pictures of her.

From 1782 till 1789 Emma Harte continued to reside under the protection of Mr. Greville. In that year he was compelled to break up his establishment, and to make

arrangements with his creditors. Sir William Hamilton prevailed upon Emma Harte to accompany him to Naples, where he had so long resided as British Ambassador. There she remained for two years, and in 1791 returned to London with Sir William Hamilton. The accomplishments which she had sedulously cultivated during her residence with Mr. Greville had been brought to perfection during her stay in Italy. In August, 1791, Romney writes: "She performed in my house last week, singing and acting before some of the nobility with the most astonishing powers; she is the talk of the whole town, and really surpasses everything both in singing and acting, that ever appeared. Gallini offered her two thousand pounds a year and two benefits if she would engage with him; on which Sir William said, pleasantly, that he had engaged her for life."

On the 6th of September, 1791, within a fortnight of the party at Romney's house, Emma Harte became Lady Hamilton, and thus acquired a legal title to the name by which she will be known as long as the history of England lasts.

Immediately after the marriage, Sir William and Lady Hamilton started for Naples. A letter from the unhappy Marie Antoinette (said to have been the last she addressed to her sister) secured her an introduction to the Queen, who soon admitted her to the closest intimacy and most complete confidence. We find from Lord St. Vincent's letters that she employed the influence she thus acquired to promote the interests of Great Britain. He distinguishes her by the title of "Patroness of the Navy." The letters of Trou-

bridge and Ball, and others of that gallant band who shared the glory of Nelson, show that they entertained a similar feeling. It was not long before she was enabled to perform an important service. The King of Naples had received from the King of Spain a private letter, communicating his determination to desert the cause of the Allies, and to join France against England. Of this letter the Queen obtained possession, and communicated its contents to Lady Hamilton. Sir William was dangerously ill, and unable to attend to his duties; but Lady Hamilton immediately despatched a copy of the letter to Lord Grenville, taking the necessary means for insuring its safety,—a precaution which was attended with the expense of about £400, which she paid out of her private purse. The Ministry immediately acted upon this information, and sent orders to Sir John Jarvis to take hostile steps, if opportunity should offer, against Spain.

Many services were performed for the English navy by Lady Hamilton during this difficult period, when the French influence was so powerful at Naples as to render it dangerous for the British Minister even to appear at Court. It was in the month of June, 1798, however, that Lady Hamilton performed the act which entitles her to the lasting gratitude of all who feel pride in the glory of the British navy.

Naples was at peace with France. One of the stipulations of the treaty was, that no more than two English ships-of-war should enter into any of the Neapolitan or Sicilian ports. Nelson was in pursuit of the French fleet,

but in urgent want of provisions and water. He despatched Troubridge to Sir William Hamilton, urging upon him to procure permission for the fleet to enter Naples or one of the Sicilian ports, as otherwise he should be compelled to run to Gibraltar for supplies, and to give over all further pursuit of the French fleet. Troubridge arrived at Naples about six o'clock in the morning, and instantly called up Sir William Hamilton. They went to the Neapolitan minister, Acton. A council was summoned, at which the feeble and vacillating King presided. Their deliberations lasted for an hour and a half, and ended in disappointment. The King dared not break with France. The application was refused. But in the meantime a more powerful agent than Sir William Hamilton had been at work, and a more vigorous and bolder mind than that of the King had come to an opposite determination. The little bare-footed girl of the Welsh village and the daughter of Maria Theresa of Austria had met. The time which Sir William Hamilton, Troubridge, and Acton had vainly spent in attempting to move the King, had been passed by Lady Hamilton with the Queen, who, having given birth to a son, was by the laws of Naples entitled to a voice in the State Council. By the most vehement entreaties and arguments, she obtained her signature to an order addressed "to all governors of the two Sicilies to receive with hospitality the British fleet, to water, victual, and aid them." As Lady Hamilton placed this order in the hands of Troubridge, he exclaimed that "it would cheer Nelson to ecstacy!"

Armed with this authority, Nelson entered the port of

Syracuse, victualled and watered his fleet, and fought and won the Battle of the Nile.

Few months elapsed before Lady Hamilton was again engaged in an enterprise requiring courage and discretion of the highest order.

The royal family of Naples were in extreme peril. The army had been defeated, though, as Nelson observed, "the Neapolitan officers did not lose much honour, for, God knows, they had not much to lose; but they lost all they had." The Court was filled with traitors, the city with ruffians and assassins. "The mind of man could not fancy things worse than they were." It was resolved by Nelson, Sir William and Lady Hamilton, and the Queen, that the only place of safety for the royal family was to be found in Nelson's ship, and that a retreat to Palermo was necessary. Had this design been discovered, it would have involved all concerned in certain and immediate destruction. Nelson and Sir William Hamilton kept away from Court.

"The whole correspondence [says Nelson in his letter to Lord St. Vincent] relative to this important business, was carried on with the greatest address by Lady Hamilton and the Queen, who being constantly in the habit of correspondence, no one could suspect. It would have been highly imprudent either in Sir William Hamilton or myself to have gone to Court, as we knew that all our movements were watched, and that even an idea was entertained by the Jacobins of arresting our person as a hostage—as they foolishly imagined—against the attack of Naples, should the French get possession of it."

A subterraneous passage led from the Queen's apartments to the shore. This was explored by Nelson and Lady

Hamilton, and through this passage, for several nights, the jewels and treasure of the royal family were conveyed. On the 21st of December, at half-past eight o'clock in the evening, three barges, with Nelson and Captain Hope on board, landed at a corner of the arsenal. Leaving Captain Hope in charge of the boats, Nelson went to the palace, brought out the whole of the royal family, placed them in the boats, and within an hour they were in safety on the deck of the *Vanguard*. Lady Hamilton was their only attendant. But even here, though in safety, their distress did not cease. On the 24th, says Nelson, "it blew harder than I ever experienced since I have been at sea."

It has been the custom to speak of Lady Hamilton as an "artful" woman. We can find nothing to justify the epithet. On the contrary, we believe that she owed much of the influence she acquired over the minds of such men as Nelson, St. Vincent, Troubridge, and Ball, to the very opposite qualities. It was her generous and impulsive nature that charmed them fully as much as her beauty or her talents. The nature of her intimacy with Nelson will probably remain forever an enigma.

What does the world owe to Lady Hamilton? England owes her the victory of the Nile. That one item is so large that it leads one to forget the other acts which earned her the gratitude, not of Nelson alone, but of St. Vincent, Troubridge, and the other "Lions of the Deep" who shared his glory. The world owes to her that the sister of Marie Antoinette did not share her horrible fate—that another head, as fair as that which fell into the basket of sawdust

in front of the Tuileries on the 16th of October, 1793, did not roll on the scaffold at Naples in 1799. When we come to take the account as it stood between the world and Lady Hamilton when it finally closed in 1815, we find it strangely changed since 1791. The balance has turned. It is the world, it is humanity that is the debtor. It is England that is bankrupt, and repudiates her debt.

We know few characters of which it is so difficult to form a just and impartial estimate as that of Lady Hamilton. Happily it is not our duty to mete out reward or punishment. Few, if any, have ever been exposed to such dangers and such temptations. The most precious gifts of Providence, bodily and mental, which were lavished upon her in profusion, were but so many additional snares in her path. "With all her faults," says one who was by no means disposed to extenuate these faults, "her goodness of heart is undeniable. She was the frequent intercessor with Nelson for offending sailors; and in every vicissitude of her fortune she manifested the warmest affection for her mother, and showed the greatest kindness to a host of discreditable relatives. Her husband, with his dying breath, bore witness that, during "the ten years of their happy union, she had never in thought, word, or deed, offended him."

Of her virtues, unhappily, prudence was not one. After the death of Nelson, and the disgraceful disregard of her claims by the Government, her affairs became greatly embarrassed. Those who owed wealth and honour to Nelson, and who had sunned themselves in her prosperity, shrunk away from her. In her distress she wrote a most

touching letter to one who had courted her smiles in other days, the Duke of Queensberry, imploring him to buy the little estate at Merton, which had been left to her by Nelson, and thus to relieve her from her most pressing embarrassments.

The cold-hearted old profligate turned a deaf ear to the request. In 1813, Emma Hamilton was a prisoner for debt in the King's Bench. Deserted by the great, the noble, and the wealthy, abandoned by the heir of his title and the recipient of his hard-earned rewards, she, whom Nelson had left as a legacy to his country, might have died in a jail. From this fate she was saved by one whose name is not to be found in the brilliant circle who surrounded her but a few short years before. Alderman Joshua Jonathan Smith (let all honour be paid to his plebeian name) redeemed his share of his country's debt, and obtained her release. She fled to Calais. In eighteen months more the strange, eventful life of Emma Hamilton was over. She died in a house, now No. 111 Rue Française, a street running parallel with the southern rampart of the town.

LA DUCHESSE DU MAINE.

LA DUCHESSE DU MAINE

(1676—1753)

CHARLES AUGUSTIN SAINTE-BEUVE

THE Duchesse du Maine was a fay, and one of the most singular: she deserves to be studied, she and her princely life, in her little court of Sceaux, in which she appears to us as one of the extreme and oddest productions of the reign of Louis XIV., the monarchical *régime* carried to excess. Born in 1676, the Duchesse du Maine died in 1753. Louise-Benédicté de Bourbon was a granddaughter of the Great Condé. In excellence of language, intelligence, and thirst for knowledge, she announced herself at an early age: like her brother, she had sparks of the spirit of her great ancestor; but, like her sister, she was almost a dwarf. When the Duc du Maine married her, having to choose between the Prince's unmarried daughters, he selected her because she was very slightly taller than her elder sister. Instead of calling them "princesses of the blood," people called them the "dolls of the blood."

The Duc du Maine who, in 1692, at the age of twenty-two, thus married the Great Condé's granddaughter, aged sixteen, was the oldest of the natural children of Louis XIV. by Madame de Montespan. This little prince, tenderly brought up by Madame de Maintenon, who was

a real mother to him, had been formed according to the ideals of the foundress of St. Cyr. He was one of those characters who never emancipate themselves, nor attain entire manhood. Instructed, but without real vision, he was never to pass the exact horizon of ideas in which he had been framed from birth. The Duchess, curious, bold, imperious and fantastical, was not to pass that horizon either, and all her boldnesses, all her flights of fancy were confined to the centre of an artificial and magic sphere.

Scarcely was she married when the little Duchess laid her hand on her timid husband and subjected him to her will in everything. She dreamed of future glory, political greatness, and power, and, in the meanwhile, she wanted to live as much in accordance with her own will and as much as a sovereign as she possibly could, rendering as little as possible to others and indulging all her own caprices, having a court of her own in which no rival star to her own should be allowed to shine. She did not completely realise these dreams of her imagination till M. du Maine bought Sceaux from the heirs of M. de Seignelay for the sum of 900,000 livres, and she had made of it her own Chantilly, Marly, and Versailles in miniature (1700).

Among the Duke's early preceptors was a M. de Malezieu, who became the essential personage of the Duchess's court and her oracle of every sort. For twenty-five years he managed to fill it with the idea of his merit and sublimity. M. de Malezieu had even been one of the causes of the acquisition of Sceaux. Already rich from the liberalities of the court, he had a fine country house at

Chateney, and there he received the Duchesse du Maine in the summer of 1699, and gave her a gallant hospitality. There were games, *fêtes,* and continual fireworks in her honour; the whole affair being managed with a certain air of innocence of the Golden Age. The people of the neighbourhood took part in these joys with song and dance; it was during the first gladness over the Peace of Ryswick. There the Duchess made her entry into that life of faëry and mythology which was so much to her taste that very soon she desired no other, and the idea occurred to her to get possession of the whole vale. The description by the Abbé Genest, one of Malezieu's colleagues, of this first visit shows us the origin of that prolonged game of shepherdhood which was about to become the very existence of the Duchess. There were gallant surprises at every step, and innocent games every hour; they played at nymphs and shepherdesses; they even precluded future prodigalities by playing at economy. "The Duc du Maine complained as he left the game that he had lost *two crowns,* and the princesses praised their good fortune at having won about as much.

In these *fêtes* and those that were repeated at the same place during the following years, we find M. de Malezieu doing the honours of his house to perfection, filling and animating all this little sphere like a universal man. Soon this entire pretty vale of Sceaux was a sort of park of the Duchess's, her pastoral kingdom and her *Tempe.* She studied Cartesianism with M. de Malezieu; with him she read Virgil, Terence, Sophocles, and Euripides, and could

soon read the Latin authors in the original. She also studied astronomy, put her eye to the telescope and microscope, and in fact instructed herself in everything by passion, whim, or caprice, but without becoming any more generally enlightened. Through it all she played comedy and the shepherdess every hour of the day and night, gave ideas to be turned into verse to her two agents, the eternal Malezieu and the Abbé Genest, invited and entertained a crowd of the elect, occupied everybody, would suffer no delay to the least of her desires, and kept going with indefatigable demonry from fear of having to reflect or be weary for a single instant. Sleep was out of the question for the Duchess: she had been persuaded that was only for simple mortals.

However, the last war of Louis XIV., the War of the Spanish Succession, broke out and embraced Europe. Fortune began to be contrary; the nations were exhausted with taxes and blood; the Duc du Maine did not distinguish himself in the army by his valour; but at Sceaux, the Duchess, radiant with hope and pride, amused herself and played on. Saint-Simon says she swam in the joys of her future greatness. The brilliance and splendour of what were called the *great nights* of Sceaux belong to these very years of disaster. The scandal of these *fêtes* and ruinous entertainments became so much the greater, or, at least, the more crying, because the misfortunes of the royal family were added to those of France; but the deaths of the principal heirs brought the Duc du Maine close to the supreme power, and even to the throne. Every rung less in the order

of legitimate succession was a stage higher in the scaffolding of his fortune. We know that the weakness of Louis XIV., obsessed by that of Madame de Maintenon, that nurse who was more than a mother to the Duc du Maine, went so far as to put the natural children on an equality with the legitimate princes of the blood and declare them at last able to succeed to the throne; and his last will, if it had been followed, would have secured for the Duc du Maine the most influential *rôle* in the Regenecy.

The public talked scandal about the president Du Mesmes, whom the Duchess tried to attach to herself in order to govern the Parliament through him. In fact, ambition lurked beneath this life of plays and comedy: in this pygmy body, in this extract of the Great Condé there were sparks of the same civil fury. We must never speak of sentiments of humanity or patriotism in those beings apart who believed themselves to be of Jupiter's line. The nation and the world were created for them; they believed that in all sincerity, and acted with a high hand in consequence.

Madame du Maine declared this on the eve of the Regency (1714) to two dukes and peers of France whom she had summoned to Sceaux to discuss *eventualities,* as we should say, but as she did not say; for if she thought ill she talked much better than we do. She wanted to assure herself of a party in the Parliament and to arrange for support in case of cavil that might arise against the right that she thought she had acquired. When she saw that those she was addressing were reserved and on their guard, she

flew into a rage, as she always did whenever she encountered the slightest resistance, and said to them that "when once one has acquired the ability to succeed to the crown, rather than allow oneself to be deprived of it *one ought to set fire to the centre and the four corners of the kingdom.*" There is the Great Condé unalloyed! When once Louis XIV. was dead and the testament broken, in her fierce anger, she was ceaselessly trying to put these evil words into execution.

This interrupted the *fêtes* at Sceaux; and there are two distinct periods in this long mythological life of pleasures, in what I call this life *between two hedges*. The first period is that of hopes, proud intoxication, and ambition concealed beneath the powers; then comes the second period, after the aim has missed, after disappointment and mistake, if we may use these words; for, even after such a fall, after the depredation of rank and outrage, after the foiled conspiracy and prison, this incorrigible nature, having returned to the old haunts, recovered without too much effort the same pride, the same intoxication, the same self-infatuation, the same faculty of active and noisy illusion, so that at seventy years of age she found herself ever young and still a shepherdess. No one with so much intellect has ever been so naïvely a goddess and shepherdess as the Duchesse du Maine. She played comedy till death, without ever suspecting that it was comedy.

"Set me always at the feet of the Duchesse du Maine," wrote Voltaire from Berlin in 1752 (she was then seventy-six years old). "She is an elect soul; she will love comedy

until her last moment, and when she falls ill I advise you to administer some fine piece of writing to her instead of Extreme Unction. We die as we have lived." To complete the picture, let us add that loving comedy to such a degree and playing it so constantly, she played it badly, and was none the less applauded.

AGNES SOREL

(1409—1449)

W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS

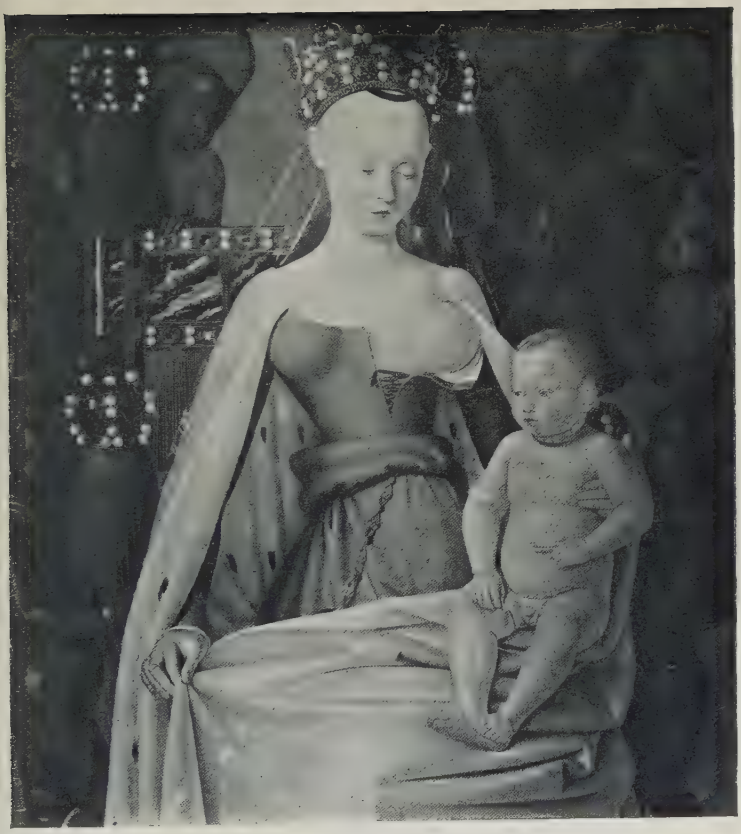
Une beauté nommée Agnès Sorel;
Jamais l'amour ne forma rien de tel,
Imaginez de Flore la jeunesse,
La taille et l'air de la nymphe des bois,
Et de Vénus la grâce-enchanteresse,
Et de l'Amour le séduisant minois:
L'art d'Arachné, le doux chant des Syrènes,
Elle avait tout; elle aurait dans ses chaînes
Mis les héros, les sages, et les rois.*

VOLTAIRE, *La Pucelle.*

THIS agreeable portrait of the heroine who divides with Joan of Arc the love and gratitude of France, the reader may wish to compare with the more luscious description drawn by Chapelain:

"Les glaces lui font voir un front pur et modeste
Sur qui vers chaque tempe à bouillons séparé
Trouvent les riches flots de ses cheveux dorés:
Sous lui roulent deux yeux dont les ardentes flammes
Mille foudres sans bruit s'élancent dans les âmes.
Deux yeux étincelants qui, pour être sereins,
N'en font pas moins trembler les plus hardis humains.

* Agnes Sorel was the bright lady's name,
And never Love had form'd so fair a dame.
Think but of Flora's youth—the wood-nymph's mien
And slender figure—of the grace serene
Of all enchanting Venus—Cupid's spell,
Arachne's art, the Syren's sweetest strains,—
All these were hers. So, fetter'd in her chains,
Heroes, and kings, and sages gladly fell.



AGNES SOREL.

Au-dessous se fait voir en chaque jour éclose
Sur un fond de lys blanc une vermeille rose,
Plus bas s'offre et s'avance une bouche enfantine
Qu' une petite fosse à chaque angle termine,
Et dont les petits bords faits d'un coral brillant,
Couvrent deux blanc fillets de perles d'Orient.
On voit que sous son col un double demi-globe
Se hausse par mesure et soulève sa robe,
L'un et l'autre d'un blanc si pur et si parfait
Qu'il ternit la blancheur de la neige et du lait." *

On the death of Henry V. in 1422, his infant son, Henry VI., was proclaimed King of England and France, in the two capitals—London and Paris—and it seemed as if the subjugation of France by the valiant islanders was now complete. The true heir of Charles VI., sunk in voluptuous indolence, made no effort to regain the kingdom of his forefathers, and the war which was still maintained against the English in various provinces was neither guided nor inspired by him who ought to have been its leader. France itself was divided into two factions, of

* A pure and modest brow the glass shows to her ardent gaze,
A brow, where o'er each temple white, the swelling tress displays
The golden glory of her hair, and underneath it shine
Two eyes, whose noiseless lightning smites the soul with awe divine.
And even when those sparkling orbs melt in a calm serene,
They may not by the boldest be with heart unshaken seen:
Lo, too, the mirror fond reveals each cheek where rosy red
Is o'er the lily's snowy white in soft sweet lustre spread,
The pouting mouth, in dimples rich, whose lips of coral curl
Over two whitely-gleaming rows of Oriental pearl,
And low beneath the taper neck, a double hemisphere
That gently rises, gently falls, and stirs the bosom gear,
Each swelling globe of white so pure, so dazzling in its sheen,
That purest milk and Alpine snow are put to shame, I ween.

whom the Armagnacs espoused the cause of Henry VI., and the Royalists struggled with little heart or hope against the ever increasing torrent of English ascendancy. Guided by the political genius and military ability of the Duke of Bedford—the King's uncle, and his Regent in France—the English proceeded steadily and surely, from victory to victory, capturing town after town, defeating the French and their allies, the Scotch, on the glorious fields of Crevant and Verneuil (July 1, 1423, August 7, 1424), breaking up the royal army into detached bands of marauders who were easily surrounded and destroyed in detail, and gradually establishing the authority of Henry VI. over the whole of France that lay north of the Loire.

The rapid progress of the English arms was facilitated by two great events: the assassination of the Duke of Burgundy at the Bridge of Montereau, under the eyes and with the tacit consent of Charles VII., which forced the Burgundians into a close alliance with England; and the temper and character of the French monarch, which, as we have hinted, were neither calculated to animate the spirit nor keep alive the loyalty of his subjects.

At this crisis, when it seemed probable that France would become a dependency of England, there arose a remarkable woman, the daughter of a peasant of Lorraine, who believing herself specially marked out by Heaven for the glorious task of chastising her country's enemies, communicated a surprising enthusiasm to her comrades, led them to the fight, relieved Orleans from the English leaguer, crowned Charles VII. at Rheims with the sacred

oil, and checked the flow of English conquest when it appeared most irresistible. After a brief career she was taken prisoner, tried by prejudiced and suborned judges on the charge of sorcery, and burned to death at Rouen on the 30th of May, 1431.

The military achievements of this wonderful heroine—one of the purest and most interesting characters in the history of the Middle Ages—were of no great importance, but the impulse she lent to the decaying patriotism of her countrymen was of the highest value to the cause of Charles VII. Joan of Arc, however, had appealed to the people, and it was the people that responded; the King still remained unmoved, the tool of his favourites, the sport of his courtesans, and wanting the spirit and resolution to strike one blow for his crown. This *Roitelet de Bourges* cared only for the wine cup and *les filles d'amour*. Not for his people, but for him was an inspiration needed, and this inspiration was also a woman's noble work. It was the work of Agnes Sorel.

Yes; however historians may seek to diminish, or explain away the incident, it is certain that the sudden awakening of Charles VII. from his voluptuous lethargy was largely due to the influence of the "lady of beauty"; and the quatrain which Francis I. inscribed beneath her portrait did but express the sentiment of all France.

"Gentille Agnès, plus d'honneur tu mérite
La cause étant de France recouvrir,
Que ce que peut dedans un cloître ouvrir
Chose nonain ou bien dévot hermite."

The anecdote told by Brantôme in his *Femmes Galantes*, is not, indeed, authentic; chronology sternly disproves it. It is one of those stories, nevertheless, which everybody wishes to be true. "The beautiful Agnes," says the chronicler, "perceiving that the King, Charles VII., was enamoured of her, and that, enervated and a coward, he cared only to whisper love to her, and made no account of his kingdom, told him that one day when she was yet a young girl, an astrologer had predicted to her that she should be loved and protected by one of the most valiant and courageous kings in Christendom. That when the King honoured her with his love, she thought he was the valorous monarch of whom she had been foretold; but seeing him so soft, with so little care for his business, she now knew that she was mistaken, and that the King so courageous was not he, but the King of England, who did such fine feats of arms, and took so many beautiful towns under his very eyes (*à sa barbe*). 'Therefore,' she said, 'I shall go and seek him out, for it is he whom the astrologer intended.' These words so sharply pricked the King's heart that he began to weep, and thenceforward, taking courage and abandoning his hunting grounds and gardens, he seized the bit with his teeth; so that by his fortune and valour he drove the English from his kingdom."

Olivier de la Marche, who lived at the court of Burgundy about 1444, says that the King had recently raised a poor damsel, a gentlewoman, named Agnes Sorel, and endowed her with such splendour and such power, that her condition might be compared to the great princesses of the

kingdom; and "certes," he says, "she was one of the handsomest women I ever saw, and did, in her position, good service to the kingdom of France. She brought to the King's notice young men of arms and gentle companions (of the sword), by whom he was afterwards well served." Du Clerc, writing about the same time, says that Agnes died of poison very young.

"It is for the reader to judge," says Hallam, "how far these passages render it improbable that Agnes Sorel was the mistress of Charles VII. at the siege of Orleans in 1428, and consequently, whether she is entitled to the praise which she has received, of being instrumental in the deliverance of France. The tradition, however, is as ancient as Francis I., who made in her honour a quatrain which is well known. This probably may have brought the story more into vogue, and led Mezeray, who was not very critical, to insert it in his history, from which it has passed to his followers. Its origin was apparently the popular character of Agnes. She was the Nell Gwynn of France, and justly beloved, not only for her charity and courtesy, but for bringing forward men of merit and turning her influence, a virtue very rare in her class, towards the public interest."

In despite of the authorities adduced by Mr. Hallam, we believe that the introduction of Agnes Sorel to the court of Charles VII. took place at an earlier date than he allows. Monstrelet's statement only shows that she had been a certain time in the Queen's service, not that she had been but five years at court. Olivier de la Marche says, in 1444,

that Charles had *recently* (*nouvellements*) raised her to triumph and power; but the old chroniclers wrote very loosely about time and dates; and, moreover, it is certain that the King had received her into his favour long before he distinguished her with public honours.

A negotiation had been opened with Philip le Hardi, through the intervention of the Duchess of Lorraine and Bar, Queen of Sicily, a woman of an active mind and far-seeing intellect. Agnes Sorel, her maid of honour, was the devoted intermediary (says Capefigue), and, so to speak, the hostage given to the King. The labour was difficult and delicate, for the Duke and the King had much to forgive and forget; but Charles granted all the Duke could ask, and at length the gallant soldiers of Burgundy were ranged on the side of France against their old allies, the English. The treaty of Arras, which concluded the long revolt of the Duke of Burgundy, was signed on the 21st of September, 1435.

From this epoch may be dated the gradual awakening of Charles VII. to a sense of his duties and responsibilities as sovereign of a land that was struggling against foreign oppression; and it is impossible not to connect with it the operation of the influence of Agnes Sorel. The King first took the field in July, 1437, when he assembled an army at Gien, of six or seven thousand men, and undertook the siege of Montereau. The siege lasted six weeks. "The King himself," says Monstrelet, "in his own person underwent much labour"; and other writers bear testimony to the brilliant valour he displayed. Thenceforward he

worked for the deliverance of his kingdom with astonishing vigour, resolution, and ability. Thenceforward he showed a determination to re-establish order, to subdue his enemies, to sacrifice his repose and pleasures to his duty, and a remarkable ability in the choice of means to arrive at ends so desirable.

Money is the sinews of war, and it is possible that Charles VII. might have entered the field at an earlier date if he had been provided with the needful resources. He could not now have accomplished his task had not a man who was at once wealthy and patriotic, and whose name ought to share the gratitude of France with those of her two heroines, come to his aid with a noble liberality.

Jacques Cœur was named "Master of the Mint." He afterwards received the official title of "Treasurer to the King," and undertook the entire control of the finances. Protected by the Duchess of Lorraine, the friend and devoted servant of Agnes Sorel, a loyal subject and an earnest patriot, he set himself to work to develop the resources of the kingdom. On his own credit he obtained loans from the bankers of Milan, Venice, and Genoa. He fixed a legal value upon money; settled the imposition of certain regular taxes; and having provided himself with the necessary means, called together the bands of guerillas scattered over France, united them into one body, and secured their discipline and obedience by regular pay for themselves and their leaders.

The influence of Agnes Sorel over Charles VII. was no longer a secret. Happily for France it was always exer-

cised for noble ends. At the voice of the romantic beauty, the French chivalry arose and gathered round their King. She still retained her modest position as maid of honour to the Queen of Sicily, but as the King's mistress her power was irresistible. Possessing, like all clever women, a quick eye for manly merit, she brought forward the young and energetic scions of the nobility of France, who attached themselves to the King with a passion of generous loyalty, unknown to the aged Knights whose heads had grown grey in intrigue and struggles for supremacy among themselves. There are extant some letters which show the almost regal style adopted by the powerful beauty, and it is pleasant to find them breathe a very gentle and womanly feeling.

Thus, she writes to the magistrate of Chesnaye-en-Bois:

"Monsieur le Prévôt, I have heard and understood that some men of Chesnaye have been confined by you on suspicion of having taken some wood from the forest of Chesnaye. Whereupon, having been told that the said men are poor and wretched persons, I wish, Monsieur le Prévôt, that the said process be not carried any further. By attending to this without delay, you will please your good mistress. "AGNES."

To Mademoiselle de Bonneville, "my good friend":

"Mademoiselle, my good friend,—I commend myself heartily to you. Pray you to be kind enough to give the bearer, Christopher, my grey gown lined with white, and all the pairs of gloves which you can find in my house; the said Christopher having lost my trunk (*mon coffret*). You will please, moreover, to receive my greyhound, Carpet, whom you will be good enough to carefully tend, and not let him go to the hunt with any one, for he neither obeys whistle nor call, and might be lost, which would trouble me greatly,

and having commended him to you, my good friend, would not please me. Praying God that he will keep you in his grace, etc.

"AGNES."

The great influence which Agnes Sorel enjoyed with Charles VII. was owing as much to her daring spirit, her lofty thoughts, and her brilliant conversation, as to her surpassing personal beauty. Her bright and powerful mind commanded the lighter intellect and more fickle brain of the King; and inspired him in many of the most critical moments of his troubled career. "His love for her," says Jean Chartier, "was for her youthful levities, her sports, her gaieties, her honourable and polished language, and also because among the beauties of the court she was the youngest and the most beautiful. She was, moreover, esteemed because she was of a very charitable life, liberal and large in her alms, distributing freely of her wealth to the poor of the church."

She thus became the inspiration of the gay chivalry of France, and the muse that whispered of high and holy deeds to its King; nor did she ever cease to stimulate him to the admirable enterprise of rescuing his kingdom from a foreign yoke, even amidst the splendid festivities of Bourges and Chinon.

The progress of the French arms was brilliant during the year 1437, and the English were expelled from Melun and Fontainebleau, Bagnolet and Pantin, and finally from the city of Paris, which had been so long devoted to their cause. The King's advisers urged upon him the advantage to be derived from his presence in the capital, and thither accord-

ingly he repaired. On the 12th of November, he slept in the Abbey of Saint Denis, and on the morrow was met by the magistrates and chief men of Paris, who conducted him through the city with the same pomp and ceremony that had welcomed Henry VI. seven years before. The return of the King was resplendent with beauty, youth, and valour; but beside Charles VII. the spectators had eyes for none but his lovely mistress. There were still enemies of the King in Paris, and many murmurs rose against the beautiful Agnes, whom the Bishop of Thérouine had contumaciously designated "the new Herodias" and "the beast of the Apocalypse." When she was informed of these things, she exclaimed with transient anger: "These Parisians are but villains; had I known they would have paid me so little honour, I would never have set foot in their city." It was not, however, against the woman that they murmured, but against the costly splendour and luxurious folly of which they chose to consider her the type.

It was at this time that Charles VII. bestowed upon his favourite the pleasant manor and castle of Beauté-sur-Marne, whence she was afterward called *la Dame de Beauté*—a flattering cognomen that was peculiarly appropriate to her personal charms.

"To the Château de Beauté," says Capefigue, "Charles VII. often repaired to rekindle his courage in the midst of the sorrows and discouragements of his restoration. The King held Paris; but the English were still masters of Normandy, Guienne, and all Gascony. At ten leagues from Paris, the standard of the leopard displayed itself all

rampant with pride, and Pontoise was the main *rendez-vous* of the English. A terrible disorder reigned in the armies of Charles VII. A further source of trouble was the riots of the Jacquerie—a tumultuous outbreak of peasants and serfs; while the chiefs of the great companies aspired to resume their ancient supremacy in the council of Charles VII. It was Agnes Sorel who now restored to the King all his energy. As the taxes yielded a scanty return, and the States-General, convened at Orléans, would grant no money but upon severe conditions, Agnes Sorel engaged her friend, Jacques Cœur, to make some heavy advances, even to ten millions of crowns, to recover Normandy by force of arms.

"The definitive triumph of the King in the war depended upon the capture of Pontoise, occupied by the English under the heroic Talbot. The King was surrounded by the flower of his chivalry—Saint Paul, La Hire, Xaintrailles, and Chabannes himself. Agnes Sorel repaired to his tent to rouse his enterprise and maintain his resolution."

In the splendour of Agnes Sorel's triumphant life, there was, nevertheless, one dark and heavy cloud: the persistent hate of the Dauphin, afterward the subtle and merciless Louis XI. It arose in some measure from political causes, and partly from the affection which had existed between her and Margaret of Scotland, the Dauphin's wife, whom he cruelly suspected of infidelity; and partly from the indignation with which he professed to behold the preference publicly accorded by the King to the mistress and the coldness shown to his mother. But did this filial devotion

spring from a pure motive, or was it the expression of his hatred for her who firmly repressed the revolts contrived by the intrigues of his criminal ambition? In one of his fits of passion he even ventured to insult the Lady of Beauty with a blow. She immediately retired from court and took up her residence in the royal Château de Loches, in Touraine. A powerful party was formed against her, and ceasing to take any active share in the direction of public affairs, she spent her latter days either at Loches, or in the sweet retirement of her Castle of Beauté sur la Marne.

Her career had been brilliant; it was fated to be brief. Charles VII. was staying at the Abbey of Jumiège, early in the year 1449, and Agnes had repaired to the neighbouring grange, La Ferme du Mesnil, when she was seized with an illness, so sudden that it suggested to her contemporaries the operation of poison, and at a later period, when Jacques Cœur met with the usual fate of illustrious patriots, he was accused of the crime. Throughout the famous beauty's life he had been her constant friend; after her death, he became, by her desire, her testamentary executor. It was improbable, therefore, that he should be guilty of so foul a deed—a deed, moreover, by which he could profit nothing, but only deprive himself of a powerful protector.

LADY BLESSINGTON.

LADY BLESSINGTON

(1789—1849)

H. BARTON BAKER

THERE was something of romance and much of sadness in Lady Blessington's career. She was the daughter of an Irish gentleman named Power, and was born at Knochbrit, near Clonmel, in Tipperary, in the year 1789 or 1790. Her father was a man of violent and even brutal temper; and her mother, although descended from one of the first families of Ireland, the famous Desmonds, does not appear to have been, by any means, a woman of refinement. Marguerite was a sickly child; every one prophesied she would not live; and there was little sympathy between her and her rudely healthful brothers and sisters. Left alone, unable to share in their sports, she became precocious and dreamy, and would sit all day weaving fantastic stories in her mind, to which, when the family gathered round the peat at night, they would listen wonderingly, and frequently, on winter evenings, the neighbours would drop in, and very soon the infant improvisatore became the marvel for miles around. No attempt was made to give her any regular education; and all the instruction she received during these early years was from a friend of her parents, a Miss Dwyer, who took a great interest in

the pretty, delicate child. When she was about seven or eight years old, the father, who was a staunch supporter of the Government, was appointed to the magistracy at Clonmel, and thither they removed. It was the time of the rebellion, and Power was one of the most savage and inexorable of the rebel-hunters. The peasantry retaliated his cruelties by killing his cattle and burning his farm produce. He seems to have been as great a terror at home as he was abroad, and to have treated his wife and children almost as badly as he did the rebels. He was a buck, a blood, who like a "rale Irish gentleman" of the time, lived at double the rate of his income, and squandered his means in whisky, claret, and deviltry. Such were the strange influences under which the future Queen of the literary salon grew up to womanhood.

At some dancing parties, where the officers of the garrison used to meet the girls of Clonmel, Marguerite was introduced to a Captain Farmer, a rich Englishman, who at once became so desperately enamoured of her that, although she was then scarcely fifteen, he made proposals for her hand. The girl not only disliked him, but had a positive dread of him. Yet the parents, now upon the brink of irretrievable ruin, eagerly caught at his offer, and coerced her into accepting it. They could not have consigned her to a more melancholy fate; there was insanity in the blood of the husband; he was subject to fits of ungovernable fury, in which he would beat her and pinch her, and sometimes lock her up without food and leave her to famish. Three months after marriage she left his house and returned to

her father's. Small welcome and little comfort did she receive beneath that roof. Soon afterwards Captain Farmer, in one of his paroxysms of fury, drew his sword upon his colonel and had to sell out. He then entered the East India Company's service, but before quitting England a formal separation was arranged between him and his wife.

Upon the years that passed between this period and her second marriage, Lady Blessington's biographers have been extremely reticent, and the present writer has no desire to depart from their example. She did not long remain at Clonmel, but went to reside with an aunt, with whom she remained some time. In 1807, we hear of her in Dublin, a little later she is in England. In 1816, Farmer returned to his native country to meet his death. It was somewhere about this period that his widow, then residing in Manchester Square, first met the Earl of Blessington. She was at the time about twenty-seven years of age, and in the full perfection of her irresistible beauty and fascination; he was some nine years her senior, a widower, a kind man, of ancient lineage, being descended from the Scotch Stuarts and the Norman Mountjoys, with a penchant for private theatricals, splendid dresses, and gaudiness of all kinds. His London residence was in St. James's Square, which, after his marriage with Marguerite Farmer, became the *rendez-vous* of all the celebrities of the day—of royal dukes, ministers, actors, divines, artists, literary men; of such men as Canning, Castlereagh, Lansdowne, Palmerston, Russell, Brougham, Erskine, Kemble, Mathews, Lawrence, Wilkie, Rogers, Moore, and Dr. Parr.

In 1822, my lord and my lady started upon the grand tour. "No Irish nobleman, probably," says a biographer, "and certainly no Irish King, ever set out on his travels with such a retinue of servants, with so many vehicles and appliances of all kinds for ease, comfort, and luxurious enjoyment." They carried with them the *batterie de cuisine,* which had served an entire club, and a cook who had been *chef* to an emperor. Their *compagnons de voyage* were one of my lady's sisters; young Charles Mathews, whom the Earl, out of friendship for the father, had offered to take charge of, that he might pursue his architectural studies in Italy; and a young French officer, named Count d'Orsay.

Several years were consumed in these travels. In 1828, we find them on their return visit to Paris, residing in the house which had belonged to Ney in the Rue de Bourbon, and which still bore his name. It was a luxurious place to die in, and for little other purpose had my lord appointed it. He had been to London to vote for the Catholic Emancipation, when, a day or two after his return, he had an attack of apoplexy, of which he expired on May 23, 1829. He left his widow two thousand a year, the lease of the house in St. James's Square, his carriages, and a portion of the plate. The bulk of the property, terribly embarrassed by his extravagances, and by-and-by to be disposed of under the Encumbered Estates Acts, went to his children by his first marriage. In 1827, he had married one of his daughters to Count d'Orsay. It proved a most unhappy union; there was no affection on

either side, and, worse still, the Count was passionately in love with the woman whom he could not marry.

A few years after the Earl's death there was a regular separation between the ill-assorted pair. That d'Orsay was the handsomest man, the most perfect exquisite of the day, the supreme leader of fashion, to have made for whom was a sufficient reputation to ensure the fortune of any tailor or bootmaker; that his equipages were the marvel, the envy, the despair of Rotten Row, are facts too well known to be dwelt upon here. But he was far from being a mere brainless fop; he was a wit, a conversationalist, an amateur artist of some pretension, and a good-hearted, generous man besides.

Lady Blessington did not return to England until 1830. As it was impossible to live in St. James's Square upon £2,000 a year, she took a small house in Seamore Place, Mayfair, while d'Orsay and his wife took another close by in Curzon Street. In 1836, she removed to that residence which is so indissolubly connected with her name, Gore House, Kensington. The Albert Hall and the Horticultural Society's Gardens now occupy the site of the house and grounds, which were once the favourite resort of all the genius of the first half of the Nineteenth Century.

Louis Napoleon was a constant visitor at Lady Blessington's. Planché, in his *Reminiscences,* describes him, when dining there on the August evening in 1840 preceding the day on which he left England to make his absurd descent upon Boulogne, as wearing a black silk handkerchief, in which was fastened a pin, the head of which was a

diamond eagle, with spread wings, clutching a thunderbolt of rubies; and relates how he invited the company to dine with him in the Tuileries on that day twelvemonth. By a strange coincidence, Gore House was the first place at which he dined upon his arrival in London after his escape from Ham.

And the presiding genius was worthy of those who paid homage at her shrine. Her splendid form and beautiful face—beautiful not only in features, but in its charm and mobility of expression—the ringing laugh, as delicious and irresistible as Jordan's, were the least of her attractions. Her manner, her tact in setting every guest at his ease, and, however obscure he might be, drawing him forth and rendering him pleased with himself, were simply enchanting. "She seldom spoke at any length," says her biographer, Mr. Madden; "never bored her hearers with disquisitions, nor dogmatised on any subject, and very rarely played the learned lady in discourse. She conversed with all around her in a give-and-take mode of interchanging of sentiments. She expressed her opinions in short, smart, and telling sentences; brilliant things were thrown off with the utmost ease; one *bon mot* followed another, without pause or effort, for a minute or two, and then, while her wit and humour were producing their desired effect, she would take care, by an apt word or gesture provocative of mirth and communicativeness, to draw out the persons who were best fitted to shine in company, and leave no intelligence, however humble, without affording it an opportunity and an encouragement to make some display even in a single trite

remark or telling observation in the course of conversation." Nor were her charms confined to beauty and intellectual graces. The same writer describes how munificent she was in her character.

Since 1822, when she produced her first volume, *Sketches and Scenes in the Metropolis,* and more especially since the Earl's death, she had been constantly engaged in literary pursuits. None of her books, however, have taken any permanent place in literature; none of her fashionable novels are now ever read; and even upon their first production several, at least, were by no means successful. The most noted of her books was her *Conversations* with Lord Byron, published after the poet's death.

This was the time when splendidly bound and bepictured Annuals were all the rage; Lady Blessington edited two or three of these, and through several years not one appeared without containing stories or verses from her pen; and, as titled contributors were those most esteemed by the patrons of this species of literature, she was very well paid for such lucubrations. When the *Daily News* was first started, she arranged with the proprietor to supply the *on-dits* of the fashionable and political world, of which she was in the position to gain the earliest intelligence, for £400 a year. Jerdan says that her pen brought her in from £2,000 to £3,000 a year; perhaps half the last-named sum would more nearly represent the truth.

But even with this and her income of £2,000 in was impossible to nearly keep pace with the expenditure at Gore House, which was never less than £4,000; and then, in the

days of Irish distress, the income, which was chiefly derived from property in that country, frequently fell short. For years her life was a splendid misery—drudging at literature, making vain efforts to curtail expenditure, passing sleepless nights, yet ever obliged to meet the world with an *insouciant* smile. During two years before the crash came, they lived in almost a state of siege from creditors; for d'Orsay, who had at first, for the sake of *les convenances,* resided in a small house close by, had by this time taken up his abode at Gore House. His debts alone are said to have amounted to £107,000, besides £13,000 in which he was indebted to private friends. He could not leave the grounds except on Sundays, or after dusk, for fear of arrest, and every visitor was carefully scrutinised before he was admitted, lest he should prove to be a myrmidon of the law. At length the bailiffs contrived to make an entrance; the Count had to fly at a moment's notice, with only a valet and a portmanteau, and make for France.

There was nothing saved from the wreck except the Countess's portrait by Chalon; all her magnificent jewellery, her splendid furniture, her rare porcelain, her sculpture, her plate, her books, her pictures were swept away by the creditors. She refused all offers of assistance from friends; for she was weary of the false position which she had struggled so hard to maintain through all these years, and it was almost a relief to have the terrible strain relaxed, even by ruin. The gross amount of the sale was over thirteen thousand pounds, but the realised amount was under twelve thousand.

She retired to Paris, and took apartments in the Champs Elysées; a few friends rallied round her, but the greater number behaved in the usual fashion of the world. Not for long, however, was she destined to experience the bitterness and humiliations of fallen greatness: five weeks after her arrival in France, on June 4, 1849, she was struck down by apoplexy and heart disease.

In his exile and poverty, Louis Napoleon had possessed no truer or more helpful friends than those of Gore House, and by his interest and untiring efforts d'Orsay had done no little towards promoting his election to the Presidency. But he experienced the proverbial ingratitude of princes. When he and the Countess arrived in Paris, the President invited them to dine at the Tuileries, but showed little other recognition of their past services. He probably owed d'Orsay *too much* to be grateful, for to a man in his position the sense of overweighted obligations is irksome and embarrassing. D'Orsay also offended him by publicly condemning the *coup d'état*. In 1852, just before his death, he was appointed to some post in connection with the Fine Arts, and that was all the benefit he received from his distinguished friend.

LA DUCHESSE DE CHEVREUSE

(1600—1679)

SUTHERLAND MENZIES

FROM the long-sustained, vigorous, and very eminent part played by Marie de Rohan in opposing the repressive system of the two great Cardinal Ministers, her name belongs equally to the political history as to that of the society and manners of the first half of the Sixteenth Century.

She came of that old and illustrious race, the issue of the first princes of Brittany, and was the daughter of Hercule de Rohan, Duke de Montbazon, a zealous servant of Henry IV., by his first wife Madeleine de Lenoncourt, sister of Urbain de Laval, Marshal de Bois-Dauphin. Born in December, 1600, she lost her mother at a very early age, and in 1617 was married to that audacious favourite of Louis XIII., De Luynes, who from the humble office of "bird-catcher" to the young King, rose to the proud dignity of Constable of France, and who, upon the faith of a king's capricious friendship, dared to undertake the reversal of the Queen-mother, Marie de' Medici's authority; hurl to destruction her great favourite, the Marshal d'Ancre; combat simultaneously princes and Protestants, and commence against Richelieu the system of Richelieu. Early

LA DUCHESSE DE CHEVREUSE.

becoming a widow, Marie next, in 1622, entered the house of Lorraine by espousing Claude, Duke de Chevreuse, one of the sons of Henry de Guise, great Chamberlain of France, whose highest merit was the name he bore, accompanied by good looks and that bravery which was never wanting to a prince of Lorraine; otherwise disorderly in the conduct of his affairs, of not very edifying manner of life, which may go far to explain and extenuate the errors of his young wife. The new Duchesse de Chevreuse had been appointed during the sway of her first husband, *surintendante* (controller) of the Queen's household, and soon became as great a favourite of Anne of Austria as the Constable de Luynes was of Louis *the Just*. The French Court was then very brilliant, and gallantry the order of the day.

Marie de Rohan was naturally vivacious and dashing, and, yielding herself up to the seductions of youth and pleasure, she had lovers, and her adorers drew her into politics. Her beauty and captivating manners were such as to fascinate and enthral the least impressible who crossed her path, and their dangerous power was extensively employed in influencing the politics of Europe, and consequently had a large share in framing her own destiny.

Madame de Chevreuse, in fact, possessed almost all the qualities befitting a great politician. One alone was wanting, and precisely that without which all the others tended to her ruin. She failed to select for pursuit a legitimate object, or rather she did not choose one for herself, but left it to another to choose for her. Madame de Chevreuse

was womanly in the highest possible degree; that quality was alike her strength and her weakness. Her secret mainspring was love, or rather gallantry, and the interest of him whom she loved became her paramount object. It is this which explains the wonderful sagacity, finesse, and energy she displayed in the vain pursuit of a chimerical aim, which ever receded before her, and seemed to draw her on by the very prestige of difficulty and danger. La Rochefoucauld accuses her of having brought misfortune upon all those whom she loved; it is equally the truth to add that all those whom she loved hurried her in the sequel into insensate enterprises. It was not she evidently who made of Buckingham a species of paladin without genius; a brilliant adventurer of Charles IV. of Lorraine; of Chalais a hare-brained blunderer, rash enough to commit himself in a conspiracy against Richelieu, on the faith of the faithless Duc d'Orléans; of Châteauneuf, an ambitious statesman, impatient of holding second rank in the Government, without being capable of taking the first.

There are two judges of her character, the testimony of whose acts must be held to be above suspicion—Richelieu and Mazarin. Richelieu did all in his power to win her over, and not being able to succeed, he treated her as an enemy worthy of himself.

To revert briefly to her long-continued struggle with Richelieu, it must not be forgotten that for twenty years she had been the personal friend and favourite of Anne of Austria, and for ten years she had suffered persecution and privation on that account. Exiled, proscribed, and threat-

ened with imprisonment, she had narrowly escaped Richelieu's grasp by disguising herself in male attire, and in that garb traversing France and Spain on horseback, had succeeded in eluding his pursuit, and after many adventures in safely reaching Madrid. Philip IV. not only heaped every kind of honour upon his sister's courageous favourite, but even, it is said, swelled the number of her conquests.

Whilst in the Spanish capital she had allied herself politically with the Minister Olivarez, and obtained great ascendancy over the Cabinet of Madrid. The war between France and Spain necessarily rendering her position in the latter country delicate and embarrassing, she had, early in 1638, sought refuge in England. Charles I. and Henrietta Maria gave her the warmest possible reception at St. James's; and the latter, on seeing again the distinguished countrywoman who had some years back conducted her as a bride from Paris to the English shores to the arms of Prince Charles, embraced her warmly, entered into all her troubles, and both the English King and Queen wrote letters pleading in her behalf, to Louis XIII., Anne of Austria, and Richelieu with regard to the restoration of her property, and permission to rejoin her children at Dampierre.

On the breaking out of the Civil War in England, Madame de Chevreuse repaired to Brussels, where, in 1641, we find her acting as the connecting link between England, Spain, and Lorraine. Without attributing to the Duchess any especial motive beyond seconding an enterprise directed

against the common enemy, she did not the less play an important part in the affair of the Count de Soissons—the most formidable conspiracy that had hitherto been hatched against Richelieu.

Suddenly Marie—all Europe—heard with a throb that the inscrutable, iron-handed man of all the human race most dreaded alike by states as by individuals had yielded to a stronger power than his own, and had closed his eyes in death (December 4, 1642). Within a few short months afterwards the King also, whose regal power he had consolidated at such a cost in blood and suffering, followed the great statesman to the tomb; having entrusted the Regency, very much against his will, to the Queen, but controlled by a Council, over which presided as Prime Minister the man most devoted to Richelieu's system—his closest friend, confidant, and creature—Jules Mazarin.

Distrustful of leaving Anne of Austria in uncontrolled possession of regal authority, Louis, by his last will and testament, had placed royalty, including his brother Gaston as lieutenant-general of the realm, in a manner under a commission. And further, Louis did not believe that he could ensure quiet to the state after his death without confirming and perpetuating, so far as in him lay, the perpetual exile of Madame de Chevreuse.

As the pupil and confidential friend of Richelieu, Mazarin had imbibed both that statesman's and the late King's opinions and sentiments touching the influence of that eminently dangerous woman. Though he had never seen her hitherto, he was not the less well acquainted with her by

repute: dreaded her mortally, and cherishing a like antipathy to her friend, Châteauneuf.

Within a few days only after the decease of Louis XIII. that same Parliament which had enrolled his will reformed it. The Queen Regent was freed from every fetter and restriction, and invested with almost absolute sovereignty; the ban was removed from the proscribed couple so solemnly denounced: Châteauneuf's prison doors were thrown open, and Madame de Chevreuse quitted Brussels triumphantly, with a *cortège* of twenty carriages, filled with lords and ladies of the highest rank in that court, to return once more to France and to the side of her royal friend and mistress. After ten years' absence from the scene of her former triumphs, social and political, did the brilliant Duchess then once more find herself safe and free in France.

When the Fronde broke out, that ardent factionist rushed once more to Brussels, and there brought over to her party the support of Spain, together with her own long experience. She was then nearly fifty years old. Age and sorrow, it is true, had dimmed the lustre of her beauty; but she was still abounding in attraction, and her firm glance, her decision, her quick and accurate perception, her dauntless courage and genius, were yet entire. She had there also found a last friend in the Marquis de Laigues, captain of the Duc d'Orléans's guards, a man of sense and resolution, whom she loved to the end, and whom, after the death of the Duc de Chevreuse in 1657, she linked probably with her own destiny by one of those "marriages of conscience" then somewhat fashionable. It is not our

purpose to follow her step by step through the last civil war, and so plunge the reader into the labyrinth of Fronde intrigues. Suffice it to say, therefore, that she played therein one of the most prominent parts. Attached, heart and soul, to that faction and its essential interests, she steered it through all the shoals and quick-sands which encircled it with incomparable skill and vigour. After having so long enlisted the support of Spain, she knew the proper moment to effect a timely separation from it. She preserved her great influence over the Duc de Lorraine, and it is not difficult to recognise her hidden hand behind the different and often contrary movements of Charles IV. She had a principal share in the three great movements which mark and link together the entire history of the Fronde between the war in Paris and the peace of Ruel. In 1650 she was inclined to prefer Mazarin to Condé, and she ventured to advise laying hands on the victor of Rocroy and Lens.

In 1651—an interval of incertitude for Mazarin, who very nearly ensnared himself in the meshes of his own craftiness and a too-complicated line of conduct—a great interest, the well-founded hope of marrying her daughter Charlotte to the Prince de Conti, brought her back once more to the Condé party, and hence the deliverance of the imprisoned princes. In 1652, the accumulated blunders of Condé brought her back again and forever to Anne of Austria and Mazarin. She did not endorse De Retz's foolish idea of constructing a third party during the revolt, nor dream of a government shared between Condé

and Mazarin, with a worn-out parliament and the fickle Duc d'Orléans. Her politic instinct told her that, after an intestine struggle so long sustained, a solid and durable power was the greatest necessity of France. Mazarin, who like Richelieu, had never opposed her but with regret, sought for, and was very glad to follow her advice. She passed over, therefore, with flying colours to the side of royalty, served it, and in return received its services. After Mazarin, she predicted the talent in Colbert, before he was appointed to office; she laboured at his elevation and the ruin of Fouquet; and the proud but judicious Marie de Rohan gave her grandson, the Duc de Chevreuse, the friend of Beauvilliers and Fénelon, to the daughter of a talented burgess—the greatest financial administrator France had ever had. Thenceforward she readily obtained all she could desire for herself and for her family; and thus having reached the summit of renown and consideration, like her two illustrious sister-politicians, Madame de Longueville and the Princess Palatine, she finished in profound peace one of the most agitated careers of that stormiest of epochs—the Seventeenth Century.

Arrived at length but too clearly at the conviction that she had given up her mind to chimæras and illusions, and seeking self-mortification through the same sentiment which had brought about her ruin, the once-haughty Duchess became the humblest of women. Renouncing all worldly grandeur, she quitted her splendid mansion in the Faubourg St. Germain, built by Le Muet, and retired into the country—not to Dampierre, which would have only too vividly

recalled to her remembrance the brilliant days of her past existence—but to a modest dwelling at Gagny, near Chelles. There she awaited her last hour, far from the world's observation, and ere long expired in tranquillity at the age of seventy-nine, the same year as Cardinal de Retz and Madame de Longueville.

LADY JANE GREY.

LADY JANE GREY

(1537—1554)

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

LADY JANE was not to reign alone: Northumberland intended to hold the reign tight-grasped in his own hands, to keep the power in his own family, and to urge the sex of Mary as among the prominent occasions of her incapacity. England was still to have a king, and that king was to be Guilford Dudley.

Jane Grey, eldest daughter of the Duke of Suffolk, was nearly of the same age with Edward. Edward had been precocious to a disease; the activity of his mind had been a symptom, or a cause, of the weakness of his body. Jane Grey's accomplishments were as extensive as Edward's; she had acquired a degree of learning rare in matured men, which she could use gracefully, and could permit to be seen by others without vanity or consciousness. Her character had developed with her talents. At fifteen she was learning Hebrew and could write Greek; at sixteen she corresponded with Bullinger in Latin at least equal to his own; but the matter of her letters is more striking than the language, and speaks more for her than the most elaborate panegyrics of admiring courtiers.

When married to Guilford Dudley, Lady Jane had

entreated that, being herself so young, and her husband scarcely older, she might continue to reside with her mother. Lady Northumberland had consented; and the new-made bride remained at home till a rumour went abroad that Edward was on the point of death, when she was told that she must remove to her father-in-law's house, till "God should call the King to his mercy"; her presence would then be required at the Tower, the King having appointed her to be the heir to the Crown.

This was the first hint which she had received of the fortune which was in store for her. She believed it to be a jest, and took no notice of the order to change her residence, till the Duchess of Northumberland came herself to fetch her. Afterwards she was taken to a house of the Duke's at Chelsea, where she remained till Sunday, the 9th of July, when a message was brought that she was wanted immediately at Sion House to receive an order from the King.

She went alone. There was no one at the palace when she arrived; but immediately after Northumberland came, attended by Pembroke, Northampton, Huntingdon, and Arundel. The Earl of Pembroke, as he approached, knelt to kiss her hand. Lady Northumberland and Lady Northampton entered, and the Duke, as President of the Council, rose to speak.

"The King," he said, "was no more. A godly life had been followed, as a consolation to their sorrows, by a godly end, and in leaving the world he had not forgotten his duty to his subjects. His Majesty had prayed on his deathbed that Almighty God would protect the realm from false

opinions, and especially from his unworthy sister; he had reflected that both the Lady Mary and the Lady Elizabeth had been cut off by Act of Parliament from the succession as illegitimate; the Lady Mary had been disobedient to her father; she had been again disobedient to her brother; she was a capital and principal enemy of God's word; and both she and her sister were bastards born; King Henry did not intend that the Crown should be worn by either of them; King Edward, therefore, had, before his death, bequeathed it to his cousin the Lady Jane; and, should the Lady Jane die without children, to her younger sister; and he had entreated the Council, for their honours' sake and for the sake of the realm, to see that his will was observed."

Northumberland, as he concluded, dropt on his knees; the four lords knelt with him, and, doing homage to the Lady Jane as Queen, they swore that they would keep their faith or lose their lives in her defence.

Lady Jane shook, covered her face with her hands, and fell fainting to the ground. Her first simple grief was for Edward's death; she felt it as the loss of a dearly loved brother. The weight of her own fortune was still more agitating; when she came to herself, she cried that it could not be; the Crown was not for her, she could not bear it—she was not fit for it. Then, knowing nothing of the falsehoods which Northumberland had told her, she clasped her hands, and, in a revulsion of feeling, she prayed God that if the great place to which she was called was, indeed, justly hers, He would give her grace to govern for His service, and for the welfare of His people.

So passed Sunday, the 9th of July, at Sion House. In London, the hope of first securing Mary being disappointed, the King's death had been publicly acknowledged; circulars were sent out to the sheriffs, mayors, and magistrates in the usual style, announcing the accession of Queen Jane, and the troops were sworn man by man to the new sovereign. The next day, Monday, the 10th of July, the royal barges came down the Thames from Richmond; and at three o'clock in the afternoon Lady Jane landed at the broad staircase at the Tower, as Queen, in undesired splendour. A few scattered groups of spectators stood to watch the arrival; but it appeared from their silence, that they had been brought together chiefly by curiosity. As the gates closed, the heralds-at-arms, with a company of the archers of the guard, rode into the city, and at the cross in Cheapside, Paul's Cross, and Fleet Street, they proclaimed "that the Lady Mary was unlawfully begotten, and that the Lady Jane Grey was Queen." The ill-humour of London was no secret, and some demonstration had been looked for in Mary's favour; but here, again, there was only silence. The heralds cried: "God save the Queen!" The archers waved their caps and cheered, but the crowd looked on impassively.

Lady Jane had retired to her apartment when the Marquis of Winchester came in to wish her joy. He had brought the Crown with him, which she had not sent for; he desired her to put it on, and see if it required alteration. She said it would do very well as it was. He then told her that, before her coronation, another crown was to be made for

her husband. Lady Jane started; and it seemed as if for the first time the dreary suspicion crossed her mind that she was, after all, but the puppet of the ambition of the Duke to raise his family to the throne. Winchester retired, and she sat indignant till Guilford Dudley appeared, when she told him that, young as she was, she knew that the Crown of England was not a thing to be trifled with. There was no Dudley in Edward's will, and, before he could be crowned, the consent of Parliament must be first asked and obtained. The boy-husband went whining to his mother, while Jane sent for Arundel and Pembroke, and told them that it was not for her to appoint Kings. She would make her husband a Duke if he desired it; but King she would not make him.

On Wednesday, the 19th, word came that the Earl of Oxford had joined Mary. A letter was written to Lord Rich admonishing him not to follow Oxford's example, but to remain true to Queen Jane, which the Council were required to sign. Had they refused, they would probably have been massacred. Towards the middle of the day, Winchester, Arundel, Pembroke, Shrewsbury, Bedford, Cheyne, Paget, Mason, and Petre found means of passing the gates, and made their way to Baynard's Castle, where they sent for the mayor, aldermen, and other great persons of the city. When they were all assembled, Arundel was the first to speak.

The country, he said, was on the brink of civil war, and if they continued to support the pretensions of Lady Jane Grey to the Crown, civil war would inevitably break out. In a few more days or weeks the child would be in arms

against the father, the brother against the brother; the quarrels of religion would add fury to the struggle; the French would interfere on one side, the Spaniards on the other, and in such a conflict the triumph of either party would be almost equally injurious to the honour, unity, freedom, and happiness of England. The friends of the commonwealth, in the face of so tremendous a danger, would not obstinately persist in encouraging the pretensions of a faction. It was for them where they sate to decide if there should be peace or war, and he implored them, for the sake of the country, to restore the Crown to her who was their lawful sovereign.

Pembroke rose next. The words of Lord Arundel, he said, were true and good, and not to be gainsaid. What others thought he knew not; for himself, he was so convinced, that he would fight in the quarrel with any man; and if words are not enough, he cried, flashing his sword out of the scabbard, "this blade shall make Mary Queen, or I will lose my life."

Not a word was raised for the Twelfth Day Queen, as Lady Jane was termed, in scornful pity, by Noailles. Some few persons thought that, before they took a decisive step, they should send notice to Northumberland, and give him time to secure his pardon. But it was held to be a needless stretch of consideration; Shrewsbury and Mason hastened off to communicate with Renard; while a hundred and fifty men were marched directly to the Tower gates, and the keys were demanded in the Queen's name.

It is said that Suffolk was unprepared; but the goodness of his heart and the weakness of his mind alike prevented

him from attempting a useless resistance; the gates were opened, and the unhappy father rushed to his daughter's room. He clutched at the canopy under which she was sitting, and tore it down; she was no longer Queen, he said, and such distinctions were not for one of her station. He then told her briefly of the revolt of the Council. She replied that his present words were more welcome to her than those in which he had advised her to accept the Crown; her reign being at an end, she asked innocently if she might leave the Tower and go home. But the Tower was a place not easy to leave, save by one route too often travelled.

Meanwhile the Lords, with the mayor and the heralds, went to the Cross at Cheapside to proclaim Mary Queen. Pembroke himself stood out to read; and this time there was no reason to complain of a silent audience. He could utter but one sentence before his voice was lost in the shout of joy which thundered into the air. "God save the Queen!" rung out from thousands of throats. "God save the Queen!" cried Pembroke himself, when he had done, and flung up his jewelled cap and tossed his purse among the crowd. The glad news spread like lightning through London, and the pent-up hearts of the citizens poured themselves out in a torrent of exultation.

Mary rarely paused upon a resolution. Making up her mind that, as Renard said, it would be better for her to go to London, she set out thither the 3d of August. Excitement lent to her hard features an expression almost of beauty, as she rode in the midst of a splendid cavalcade of knights and nobles.

The trials of the conspirators were now resolved upon. The Queen was determined to spare Lady Jane Grey, in spite of all which Renard could urge; but the state of London showed that the punishment of the really guilty could no longer be safely delayed. On this point all parties in the Council were agreed. On Friday, the 18th of August, therefore, a court of peers was formed in Westminster Hall, with the aged Duke of Norfolk for High Steward, to try John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland; the Earl of Warwick, and the Marquis of Northampton for high treason.

Renard in the closet, Gardiner in the pulpit, alike told her that she must show no more mercy. "The Queen's blood is up at last," Renard wrote exultingly to the Emperor on the 8th of February; "the Duke of Suffolk, Lord Thomas Grey, and Sir James Crofts have written to ask for mercy, but they will find none; their heads will fall, and so will Courtenay's and Elizabeth's. I have told the Queen that she must be especially prompt with these two." He was sure that the two centres of all past and all possible conspiracies were Elizabeth and Courtenay, and that when their heads and the heads of the Greys were off, she would have nothing more to fear. Jane Grey was guilty of having been once called Queen, and Mary, who before had been generously deaf to the Emperor's advice, and to Renard's arguments, yielded in her present humour. Philip was beckoning in the distance; and while Jane Grey lived, Philip, she was again and again assured, must remain forever separated from her arms. In killing her body, however, Mary desired to have

mercy on her soul; and she sent the message of death by the excellent Feckenham, afterwards Abbot of Westminster, who was to bring her, if possible, to obedience to the Catholic faith.

Feckenham, a man full of gentle and tender humanity, felt to the bottom of his soul the errand on which he was despatched. He felt as a Catholic priest—but he felt also as a man. On admission to Lady Jane's room he told her, also, for what reason the Queen had selected him to communicate the sentence. She listened calmly. The time was short, she said; too short to be spent in theological discussion; which, if Feckenham would permit, she would decline.

The night before she suffered she wrote a few sentences of advice to her sister on the blank leaf of a New Testament. To her father, knowing his weakness, and knowing, too, how he would be worked on to imitate the recantation of Northumberland, she sent a letter of exquisite beauty, in which the exhortations of a dying saint are tempered with the reverence of a daughter for her father.

Her husband was also to die, and to die before her. The morning on which they were to suffer he begged for a last interview and a last embrace. It was left to herself to consent or refuse. If, she replied, the meeting would benefit either of their souls, she would see him with pleasure; but, in her own opinion, it would only increase their trial. They would meet soon enough in the other world.

He died, therefore, without seeing her again. She saw him once alive as he was led to the scaffold, and again as he returned a mutilated corpse in the death-cart. It was not

wilful cruelty. The officer in command had forgotten that the ordinary road led past her window. But the delicate girl of seventeen was as masculine in her heart as in her intellect. When her own turn arrived, Sir John Brydges led her down to the green; her attendants were in an agony of tears, but her own eyes were dry. She prayed quietly till she reached the foot of the scaffold, when she turned to Feckenham, who still clung to her side. "Go now," she said: "God grant you all your desires, and accept my own warm thanks for your attentions to me; although, indeed, those attentions have tried me more than death can now terrify me." She sprung up the steps, and said briefly that she had broken the law in accepting the Crown; but as to any guilt of intention, she wrung her hands, and said she washed them clean of it in innocency before God and man. She entreated her hearers to bear her witness that she died a Christian woman; that she looked to be saved only by the mercy of God and the merits of his Son: she begged for their prayers as long as she was alive. Feckenham had still followed her, notwithstanding his dismissal. "Shall I say the *Miserere* psalm?" she said to him. When it was done, she let down her hair with her attendants' help and uncovered her neck. The rest may be told in the words of the chronicler:

"The hangman kneeled down and asked her forgiveness, whom she forgave most willingly. Then he willed her to stand upon the straw, which doing she saw the block. Then she said: 'I pray you despatch me quickly.' Then she kneeled down, saying, 'Will you take it off before I lay me

down?' and the hangman answered, 'No, Madam.' She tied a kercher about her eyes; then, feeling for the block, she said: 'What shall I do; where is it?' One of the by-standers guiding her thereunto, she laid her head down upon the block, and stretched forth her body, and said: 'Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' And so ended."

ANNE DE PISSELEU, DUCHESSE D'ESTAMPES

(About 1508—about 1576)

MADAME BOLLY

ANNE DE PISSELEU, Duchesse d'Estampes, first known as Mademoiselle d'Heilly, daughter of Guillaume de Pisseleu, was born about the year 1508. As first maid of honour to the Duchesse d'Angoulême, mother of Francis I., she was in the train of that princess to whom the King confided the Regency during his captivity, and went with her to meet the monarch when he returned to France after the conclusion of the treaty of Madrid. Francis saw Mademoiselle d'Heilly for the first time at Bayonne; she was eighteen years old. The King was so struck with her dazzling charms that he fell deeply in love with them and sacrificed the Comtesse de Châteaubriant, whom he had loved tenderly, for her. Beauty was not the only advantage that Mademoiselle d'Heilly possessed: her solid and brilliant mind immediately assured her empire over the King's heart and rendered it lasting. Sensitive to the beauty of art and the merit of letters, she patronised both and deserved the title of "*Mècéne des beaux-esprits*" and the eulogy of being "*la plus belle des savantes et la plus savante des belles.*"

In order to give rank to his mistress, the King married

ANNE DE PISSELEU.

her to Jean de Brosse, whose father had followed the Duc de Bourbon's party. In favour of this marriage, Francis I. returned the confiscated goods of his house to Jean de Brosse, made him Knight of his Order and Governor of Brittany, and gave him the duchy of Estampes.

Loved by the greatest King of the day in Europe, and herself a repository of all the graces, the Duchesse took advantage of her position to enrich her family. Her three brothers obtained bishoprics; two of her sisters, rich abbeys; and the others became allied to the most important houses in the kingdom. All this good fortune, however, was disturbed by the jealousy that the Duchesse d'Estampes conceived for Diane de Poitiers, the Dauphin's mistress, who hated her, on her part. The reciprocal hatred of the two rivals burst out on every occasion and was soon shared by the entire court. This misunderstanding brought disunion even into the royal family. The Duchesse formed a party in favour of the Duc d'Orléans, a young prince, whose brilliant valour already recalled that of Francis I. Diane, who was called at that time *la grande sénéchale,* placed herself at the head of the Dauphin's party.

These dissensions had the most fateful issue; for the Duchesse, without considering the interests of the state and in the fear that the Dauphin would overcome the Duc d'Orléans, opposed as much as was in her power the progress of that prince against the armies of Charles V. When that monarch crossed France in 1540 to enter the Low Countries, and trusted himself with a noble confidence to the loyalty of Francis I., the Duchesse d'Estampes counselled the King

to seize the Emperor's person. The King, too generous to follow such advice, contented himself with saying to that prince as he presented the Duchesse to him: "My brother, here is a beautiful lady who advises me to atone in Paris for the work of Madrid."

It has been said that Charles replied coldly: "If the advice is good; you ought to follow it."

However, alarmed at the peril in which he found himself, the Emperor tried to win over the favourite; several authors pretend he succeeded by making her accept a very beautiful diamond, which he dropped on purpose, and which she hastened to pick up to return to him. This fact is scarcely probable. How can we believe that the pleasure of possessing a diamond, no matter how beautiful, could have so great an influence upon a woman like the Duchesse d'Estampes, and in her situation? Without knowing exactly what means the Emperor used to gain her, it is certain that she had subsequent dealings with him that were very hurtful to the interests of France. Always guided by her hatred for Diane and the desire to thwart the Dauphin, through her intrigues she forced that young prince to raise the siege of Perpignan; the enemy, informed by the Duchesse of the King's designs, threw two thousand men into the place, and by that means rendered it impregnable.

When Charles V. and Henry VIII. attacked Francis I. together in 1544, the Duchesse was again accused of having given the secret of the operations in the country to the Emperor. The seizure of Epernay, that of Château-Thierry, and the success of the Imperials, whose approach brought terror even to the walls of Paris, are also attributed to her.

Abusing the King's passion and the power that she held over his mind, she made him sign the Treaty of Crépy, so disgraceful to France that the Dauphin protested against it for several weeks after it was signed.

What the favourite had feared for so long, really happened: Francis I. died on March 31, 1547. The Dauphin succeeded him under the name of Henry II., and it may be said that Diane ascended the throne with him.

The power of the Duchesse d'Estampes had always been contested; Diane reigned openly. All the Duchesse's creatures were disgraced, or exiled; but, as if the power of being able to harm her rival suddenly took away all desire to do so, Diane contented herself with ordering her to retire to her estates and allowing her to enjoy her possessions.

After the King's death, the Duchesse d'Estampes, who had always protected the so-called reformed religion—probably because Diane persecuted it—openly embraced Protestantism. She used the revenue of the fortune she had acquired during her favour to make proselytes and to succour poor Protestants.

It is singular that Théodore de Bèze, who mentions all the noted people that favoured reform, does not speak of Madame d'Estampes; doubtless he feared to harm his sect by acknowledging such a protectress.

This favourite, whom posterity will eternally reproach for having betrayed the confidence of the King who loved her for more than twenty years, died in such obscurity that the period of her death is scarcely known: it is thought to be about the year 1576.

BIANCA CAPELLO

(About 1548—1587)

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

TOWARDS the end of the reign of Cosmo the Great, that is to say about the beginning of the year 1565, a young man named Pietro Bonaventuri, of an honourable but poor family, went to Venice to seek his fortune. One of his uncles, who bore the same name, and who had lived in the most serene city for about twenty years, recommended him to the banking-house of Salviati, of which he himself was a manager. The young man was of haughty appearance, wrote a beautiful hand, and cyphered like an astrologer; he was accepted as a clerk with a promise that if he conducted himself well, he should receive, in the course of three or four years, 150 or 200 ducats.

Opposite the Salviati bank there lived a rich Venetian gentleman, the head of the house of Capello, who had a son and a daughter. The son was a handsome young man with pointed beard and up-turned moustache, and was clever and insolent in speech.

As for Bianca, she was a charming girl of fifteen or sixteen, with a dead white complexion, over which at the slightest emotion a blush would pass like a rosy cloud; hair of that intense blonde that Raphael thinks so beautiful; black eyes

BIANCA CAPELLO.

full of fire; a supple and firm waist; and as loving as Juliet herself,—in fact, waiting for the moment when a handsome Romeo would cross her path to say to her, as he said to the young girl of Verona, "I will give myself to you, or the tomb."

She saw Pietro Bonaventuri; the young man's window looked upon hers. First, they exchanged glances; then, signs; and then, vows of love. Arrived at this point, nothing separated them but distance: this distance Bianca leaped.

Every night when the entire household of the noble Capello was asleep, and Bianca's nurse had retired into the next room, she threw a dark robe over her so as not to be noticed in the street; stole down the marble steps of her father's palace as softly as a shadow; opened the door and crossed the street. At the opposite door she found her lover. Then, together, with tender embraces, they went up to Pietro's little room. When day was about to break, Bianca went downstairs and returned to her own chamber, where her nurse found her sleeping in the morning.

One night when Bianca was with her lover, a baker's boy found the door open and thought he ought to shut it; ten minutes later, Bianca came downstairs and found that it was impossible to return to her father's.

Bianca was one of those strong natures that takes a resolution in an instant and remains firm; she saw her whole future changed by an accident; and she unhesitatingly accepted the new life made for her by this accident.

Bianca went back to her lover, told him what had happened, asked if he was ready to sacrifice everything for her

as she was for him, and proposed that they should make use of the two night hours that remained to leave Venice and put themselves beyond reach of pursuit. Pietro Bonaventuri agreed. The two young people jumped into a gondola and repaired to the keeper of the port. There Pietro Bonaventuri made himself known and said that important business for the Salviati bank compelled him to leave Venice that moment for Rimini. The keeper gave the order to drop the bridge and the two fugitives passed over; only instead of taking the road to Rimini, they hastily went to Ferrara.

The fugitives arrived in Florence without any accident, but, you may well believe, greatly fatigued, and sought refuge with Bonaventuri's father, who lived in a small apartment on the second floor of Saint Mark's Square; these children were welcomed by their poor parents.

Three months passed, during which poor Bianca, accustomed to all the delights of luxury, never let a single complaint of her misery escape her lips. Her one amusement was to look into the street from her window; but the poor prisoner was never heard to envy the liberty of those, who, sad or joyful, passed by.

Among the latter was the young Grand Duke, who was going to visit his father in his castle at Petraja. Francesco usually made this little trip on horseback; and, being a young, handsome, and gallant cavalier, whenever he came to any spot where he could be seen by fair eyes, he would make his horse caracole. One day the Prince raised his eyes by chance and saw in the shadow of the shutters the burning eyes of a young girl. Bianca withdrew quickly, so quickly

that she dropped a bouquet that she held in her hand. The Prince jumped from his horse, picked up the flowers, and waited a moment to see if that beautiful vision would appear again; then seeing that the blind remained lowered, he put the bouquet in his doublet, and went on his way, looking back two or three times before disappearing.

The next day he passed by at the same hour; but although Bianca stood trembling behind the shutter, the window was closed and no flower fell through the slats.

Two days later the Prince passed by again; but the window was unrelenting to the secret prayers that he addressed to it.

Then he decided on another plan. He sent for a Spanish gentleman named Mondragone, who had been given a position in his court by his father; he placed his hand upon his shoulder, looked into his face, and said:

"Mondragone, in Saint Mark's Square, on the second floor of the house at the corner of Santa Croce and the *via Larga,* there is a young girl whom I do not recognise as belonging to Florence; she is beautiful; she pleases me; in eight days you must bring her here."

Mondragone, knowing that under certain circumstances the first requisite of a courtier is to be laconic, replied: "You shall have her."

It soon happened that Pietro was the lover of a veiled lady and Bianca was the Grand Duke's mistress.

However, be it understood that Cosmo I. was at this juncture negotiating for the marriage of the Grand Duke Francesco with the Archduchess Jeanne of Austria. The

marriage took place; the Grand Duke gave up a year to propriety, visiting Bianca only at night, and then leaving his palace alone and in disguise; but at the end of the year, having received a letter from the Grand Duke, his father, telling him that such promenades were dangerous for a prince, he gave Pietro some employment in the Pitti Palace, and bought for Bianca the charming house that is still to be seen in the *via Maggio*, surmounted by the Medici arms. Bianca was now so near Francesco that he had only to cross the Pitti Square, to find himself at her side.

We know Pietro's inclination for dissipation and insolence. His new position gave him new vigour. He threw himself with might and main into orgies, play and love adventures, and made such capital enemies of hard drinkers, ruined card-players, and deceived husbands that one fine morning he was found in a blind alley at the end of the Vecchio bridge, stabbed in five or six places.

Poor Jeanne of Austria was not happy; she was Grand Duchess in name, but Bianca Capello was Grand Duchess in reality. For employment, for pardon, and for favours people addressed themselves to the Venetian. The Venetian was all powerful; she had her pages, her court, and her flatterers; only the poor went to the Grand Duchess Jeanne. However, Jeanne was a pious and strict woman, as the princesses of the House of Austria usually are; she religiously carried her griefs to God. God inclined his ear unto her, saw how she suffered, and took her from the world.

Without reproaching him about his love, she begged Francesco to live more religiously in future. Francesco,

bathing her hands with his tears, promised her that he would never see Bianca again. Jeanne gave a sad smile, shook her head doubtfully, murmured a prayer in which the Grand Duke heard his name several times, and died. By this marriage she left three daughters and a son.

For four months Francesco kept his word; for four months Bianca was not exiled, but was absent from Florence. But Bianca knew her power; she allowed time for the Grand Duke's sorrow, remorse, and vows to pass away; then, one day she put herself directly in his path; sorrow, remorse, and vows,—all were forgotten.

She had for a confessor a Capuchin, who was as adroit and intriguing as a Jesuit; she sent him to the Prince. The Prince told him of his remorse; the Capuchin said that the only way to quiet himself was to marry Bianca. The Grand Duke had already thought so himself. His father, Cosmo the Great, had given him an example by marrying Camilla Martelli in his old age. People protested when that marriage took place, but afterwards they kept quiet. Francesco thought that it would be the same in his case as it was in Cosmo's; and, always encouraged by the Capuchin, he decided to bring his conscience and his desires into harmony.

For a long time the courtiers, noting that the wind blew from this quarter, had spoken to the Grand Duke of such unions as the most natural things in the world, and had quoted every example that their memories could furnish of princes who had chosen their wives from non-princely families. One flattering fact decided Francesco. At this moment, Venice, having need of Florence, declared Bianca

Capello a daughter of the Republic, so that he secretly married Bianca in the chapel of the Pitti Palace, while Cardinal Ferdinand was looking for a wife for him in every court of Europe.

It had been decided to keep this marriage secret, but that did not suit the Grand Duchess; she had not gone so far in order to stop in her course, and six months had not elapsed before it was known that she had taken the place of Jeanne of Austria on the throne as well as in private.

Three years after the marriage of Francesco and Bianca, that is to say about the beginning of the year 1585, the young Archduke died, leaving the throne of Tuscany without a direct heir; or, in default of a direct heir, the Cardinal Ferdinand should become Grand Duke on the death of his brother.

In 1576, the Grand Duke Ferdinand and Bianca had had a son; but this son was illegitimate, and could not succeed his father; moreover, singular stories had been related regarding his birth. The throne then would revert to the Cardinal unless the Grand Duchess should have another child, and Francesco began to despair of such happiness when Bianca announced her pretended hopes.

This time the Cardinal decided to take up his residence in the Pitti Palace. The Cardinal's arrival was not very agreeable to Bianca, who was not deceived as to the true reason for the renewal of fraternal affection. Bianca knew that the Cardinal was playing the spy at every moment.

One day the Duchess's confessor entered, a Capuchin in a long robe. The Cardinal approached him and took him

by the arm, begging him to give his affectionate regards to his sister. The Cardinal thought he felt something strange in his wide sleeve; he put in his hand and drew out a fine boy.

The monk, knowing it was best to avoid scandal, asked the Cardinal what he should do. The Cardinal told him to go into the Grand Duchess's room and tell her what had happened. The Grand Duchess saw that she would have to renounce giving an heir to the throne this time. The Cardinal, for his part, kept his mouth shut and said nothing whatever of this frustrated scheme.

The result was that nothing interrupted the harmony that reigned between the two brothers. In the following autumn, the Cardinal was even invited by Francesco to spend his two months of *Villegiatura* at Poggia a Cajano. He accepted, for he was a great lover of the chase, and the castle of Poggia a Cajano was one of the Grand Duke Francesco's best game-preserves.

On the very day of the Cardinal's arrival, Bianca, who knew that the Cardinal was fond of a certain kind of tart, made one for him herself. The Cardinal learned from the Grand Duke Francesco of his sister-in-law's attention, and, as his belief in her reconciliation with him was not very deep, this graciousness on her part gave him some uneasiness. Happily, the Cardinal possessed an opal that had been given him by Pope Sixtus V., which possessed the property of turning dull on the approach of poison. The Cardinal did not neglect putting Bianca's tart to the test. It happened as he had imagined. On the approach of the tart the opal became

dim, whereupon the Cardinal declared that upon second thoughts he would not eat the tart. The Duke insisted for a moment. Seeing that his entreaties were useless: "Oh, well!" he said, turning towards his wife, "since my brother will not eat his favourite dish, I will eat it myself, so that the Grand Duchess shall not have made this pastry for nothing," and he helped himself to a piece of the tart.

Bianca made a gesture to prevent him; but she stopped. The position was horrible: she would have to acknowledge her crime, or allow her husband to die of poison. She rapidly surveyed her past and saw that she had exhausted all earthly pleasures and attained the height of worldly grandeur. Her decision was as rapid as it had been on the day that she left Venice with Pietro; she cut a piece of the tart similar to that the Grand Duke had taken, held out one hand to him, and from the other eat the piece of tart with a smile.

On the following day Francesco and Bianca were dead. At Ferdinand's order, a physician opened their bodies and declared that they had succumbed to a malignant fever. Three days later the Cardinal threw his biretta to the dogs and ascended the throne.

MADAME DE POMPADOUR,

MADAME DE POMPADOUR

(1720—1764)

ARSENE HOUSSAYE

MADAME DE POMPADOUR was born in Paris in 1720. She always said it was 1722. It is affirmed that Poisson, her father, at least the husband of her mother, was a sutler in the army; some historians state that he was the butcher of the Hospital of the Invalides, and was condemned to be hung; according to Voltaire, she was the daughter of a farmer of Fertésous-Jouarre. What matters it since he who was truly a father to her was the farmer-general, Lenormant de Tourneheim. This gentleman, thinking her worthy of his fortune, took her to his home, and brought her up as if she had been his own daughter. He gave her the name of Jeanne-Antoinette. She bore till she was sixteen years of age this sweet name of Jeanne. From her infancy she exhibited a passion for music and drawing. All the first masters of the day were summoned to the hotel of Lenormant de Tourneheim. Her masters did not disgust Jeanne with the fine arts of which she was so fond. Her talent was soon widely known. Fontenelle, Voltaire, Duclos, and Crébillon, who were received at the hotel as men of wit, went about everywhere, talking of her beauty, her grace, and talent.

Madame de Pompadour was an example of a woman that was both handsome and pretty; the lines of her face possessed all the harmony and elevation of a creation of Raphael's; but instead of the elevated sentiment with which that great master animated his faces, there was the smiling expression of a Parisian woman. She possessed in the highest degree all that gives to the face brilliancy, charm, and sportive gaiety. No lady at Court had then so noble and coquettish a bearing, such delicate and attractive features, so elegant and graceful a figure. Her mother used always to say: "A king alone is worthy of my daughter." Jeanne had an early presentiment of a throne; at first, from the ambitious longings of her mother; afterward, because she believed that she was in love with the King. "She confessed to me," says Voltaire, in his *Memoirs,* "that she had a secret presentiment that the King would fall in love with her, and that she had a violent inclination for him."

The farmer-general had a nephew, Lenormant d'Etioles. He was an amiable young man, and had the character and manners of a gentleman; he was heir to the immense fortune of the farmer-general. at least according to law. Jeanne, on her side, had some claim to a share of this fortune. It was a very simple way of making all agreed, by marrying the young people. Jeanne, as we have seen, was already in love with the King; she married d'Etioles without shifting her point of view: Versailles, Versailles, that was her only horizon.. Her young husband became desperately enarmoured of her; but this passion of his, which amounted almost to madness, she never felt in the least. She received

it with resignation, as a misfortune that could not last long.

The hotel of the newly-married couple, *Rue-Croix-des Petits-Champs,* was established on a lordly footing; the best company in Paris left the fashionable *salons* for that of Madame d'Etioles; until that time, there had never been such a gorgeous display of luxury in France. The young bride hoped by this means to make something of a noise at Court, and thus excite the curiosity of the King. Day after day passed away in feasts and brilliant entertainments. Celebrated actors, poets, artists, and foreigners, all made their *rendez-vous* at this hotel, the mistress of which was its life and ornament; all the world went there, in one word, except the King.

Monsieur d'Etioles had a deserted *château* in the forest of Senart; Madame d'Etioles, having heard that the King often hunted in that forest, told her husband that the physicians had recommended the air of the forest for her nervous attacks. Her husband, who did not foresee the design of his wife, furnished the *château* with great luxury. Once installed in their new quarters, Madame d'Etioles ordered three or four coaches of a light, fairy-like build, in order to take the air for the benefit of her attacks of the vapours. As she was always on the watch, she often met the King in the forest; at first the King passed without noticing her, then he remarked her fine horses. "What a beautiful phaeton!" said he, meeting it for the third time. Finally, he noticed herself, but confined himself to an observation on her beauty.

One afternoon Louis XV. was overtaken by a storm while hunting in the forest. He entered the *Château d'Etioles;* but Madame de Châteauroux was with him. Madame d'Etioles was not disheartened; she continued to pass before the eyes of the royal hunter, "sometimes like a goddess descended from heaven, at one time dressed in an azure robe, seated in a rose-coloured phaeton; at others, dressed in rose-colour, in an azure phaeton."

Madame d'Etioles passed two summers without obtaining anything from the King but a careless glance. For an ambitious woman this was not enough; she returned to Paris at the end of the season, determined to change her mode of attack. Madame de Châteauroux was dead, the throne was vacant, there was not an hour to lose, for under Louis XV., *"the queen is dead, long live the queen!"*

According to some biographers, the first *rendez-vous* was at Versailles; Madame d'Etioles was seated upon the throne from the evening until the next morning; but as soon as the sun arose, the King bade her farewell, according to his usual custom. However that may be, it is quite certain that after the first interview a whole month passed, without her hearing anything from Louis XV. Her grief was extreme; she waited, she waited; she could not thus exist any longer. Every noise, every movement, she thought was a despatch from Versailles; the hours passed at the same time too fast and too slow. The King had forgotten her! Upon what do the destinies of a nation hang? The weakness of human passion! She who was for nearly twenty-four years the mistress of the King and sovereign of France, commenced

her career by being forgotten and abandoned! Finally, one day the King said to his valet, that he was *ennuyéd,* "By-the-by, Binet, that woman!" "Indeed, sire, she is, no doubt, still more *ennuyéd* than even your Majesty." "Do you think so?" "She passes her days in weeping." "Well, then, go and tell her I will wipe away her tears."

Madame d'Etioles returned. The King found in her more charms than at the first interview, for on the next morning when the sun arose, she remained upon the throne.

It is known that Louis XV. passed a life of constant *ennui.* "The people are suffering," said the Duc de Choisel to him one day. "I am *ennuyéd,"* answered the King.

Madame d'Etioles established her empire by varying the life of her royal lover, by means of hunting parties, promenades, *fêtes,* theatrical representations, suppers. In the first place, she had the art of metamorphosing herself every hour in the day. No one knew better than she did how to vary the play of her features: at one time she was as languishing and sentimental as a Madonna in heavenly reverie; at another she was as full of life, as gay, and coquettish as a Spanish girl. She had to a wonderful degree the gift of tears; she displayed so much art in weeping well, that she gave to her tears, says a poet, the value of pearls. Whoever saw her in the morning, proud, imperious, a queen, in all the splendour of her power, found her in the evening sportive, giddy, a madcap, presiding over her little suppers with the spirit of an actress after the play. The Abbé Soulavie, who saw her often, has left behind him a finished portrait of her: "Besides the agreableness of a beautiful

face, full of vivacity, Madame de Pompadour possessed in perfection the art of creating for herself another face, and this new creation was another result of her studies upon the relations between her soul and her physiognomy. Without altering her attitude, her visage was a perfect Proteus." The gift of tears she only had, like other actresses, in the presence of the public. Madame de Pompadour's public was Louis XV.

It would be difficult to study the political system of Madame de Pompadour, if, indeed, she had any system at all. It cannot be denied that she had some fixed opinions, but, most generally, they were caprices. However, the Duc de Choiseul, who held the offices of three ministers, who disposed of all the power of government, followed to the letter the policy of Madame de Pompadour, in overturning the system of Louis XIV., in forming an alliance with Austria, in forming a league, or rather a family compact with Italy and Spain. The policy of Madame de Pompadour united Corsica to France: thus Bonaparte, who was born after the death of the Marchioness, owed to her his title of a French citizen.

Women never live for the future: their reign is from day to day, for it is the power of beauty only which diminishes as it advances. The women of genius who have attempted to govern the world have never contemplated the clouds of a distant horizon; they have been able to look about them, but never at a distance from themselves. "*After me the deluge!*" was the saying of Madame de Pompadour.

The Eighteenth Century was a century of striking contrasts: the first minister who succeeded Cardinal de Fleury was Madame de Pompadour. Under the Cardinal, a blind superstition protected the throne against Parliament; under the Marchioness, we see philosophy arising, which is destined to worry in their turn both clergy and Parliament. Under Madame de Pompadour, the King, if he had been as bold as she was, would have been more of a king than ever. The Cardinal was miserly as an administrator, the Marchioness showed herself as prodigal as a mistress, saying that money ought to flow from the throne in a full current, in a generous stream, that should overflow the whole state. The Cardinal had been hostile to Austria and favourable to Prussia; the Marchioness made war against Frederick, in order to please Maria Theresa. The battle of Rosbach was a failure, but, as she herself asked, had she the power of making heroes?

Is it right for the historian to blame this woman for all the disgrace of the reign of Louis XV.? She reached the throne at the moment when royalty by the grace of God was disappearing before the sovereignty of public opinion. There was nothing to be done at Versailles, for in Paris the power was already in the hands of Voltaire, Montesquieu, Jean Jacques, and Diderot. Madame de Pompadour had so just an opinion of the power of this sovereignty that she anticipated it. Did she not protect to the utmost the philosophers, those even who were destined to overthrow the throne upon which she was seated? The artists who have painted her have never forgotten to represent in her

pictures such revolutionary books as the *Encyclopædia,* the *Philosophical Dictionary,* the *Spirit of the Laws,* and the *Social Contract.*

Madame de Pompadour loved revenge; this was her great fault. For a single word she imprisoned Latude in the Bastille; for a sonnet, she exiled Maurepas. Frederick called her influence the petticoat reign; the Seven Years' War was the consequence.

Louis XV., always religious, at least after supper, trusting the destinies of France to Providence, used to say that God alone had hands sufficiently strong to hold the reins of government. He, therefore, looked with pity upon the profound deliberations of his ministers. "What matters it?" he used to say to Madame de Pompadour, "little storms will be sure to be raised from all they do, but shall we not be under cover?" From all these storms, badly dispersed, there arose a tempest which overturned the throne.

In order to preserve her empire, Madame de Pompadour condescended to all kinds of meanness and humiliation. She banished the Jesuits in order to make friends with some members of the Parliament; she banished the Parliament to make friends with the clergy. In order to prevent her royal lover from taking another acknowledged mistress from the ladies of the Court, she invented that harem without brilliancy or romance which was called the *Parc-aux-Cerfs,* "the pillow of Louis XV.'s debauchery," as Chateaubriand called it. Finally, hated and despised by all France, Madame de Pompadour said to Louis XV.: "Keep me by you, I pray: it is I who protect you! I assume upon my head all the

hatred of the whole of France; the times are bad for kings; as soon as I am gone, all the insults which are cast upon the Marchioness de Pompadour will be heaped upon the King!"

Madame de Pompadour spent her last days in deep despondency. Since she had reached the decline of her favour and her reign, she had no more friends; but the King himself still submitted to her influence, but did not love her any longer.

It has been said that she died of poison, administered either by the Jesuits, who overwhelmed her with anonymous letters, or by her enemies at Versailles. Madame de Pompadour, all sensible people think so, died because she had reached the age of forty-four, because she owed her power to her beauty alone, and because she did not wish to survive her beauty. She suffered a long time in silence, concealing always, beneath a pale smile, death, the approach of which she already felt; at last she betook herself to her bed, never to rise again. She was at her Château de Choisy; the King and his courtiers did not believe that her disease was serious, but she did not blind herself. She begged the King to conduct her to Versailles; she wished to die upon the theatre of her glory, to die like a queen in a royal palace, giving her commands to the last, and beholding at her feet a crowd of courtiers.

She died in April (April 15, 1764), like Diane de Poitiers, Gabrielle d'Estrées, and Madame de Maintenon. The curé of Madeleine attended her in her last moments. When he bowed after having given her the blessing, she said to him, rousing herself, for she was nearly dead: *"Wait,*

my dear curé, we will depart together." The King had, till then exhibited towards her a friendship based on remembrance and gratitude; but as soon as she had breathed her last sigh, he only troubled himself about the means of getting rid of her mortal remains. He ordered her to be taken to her hotel in Paris. When the carriage, which was bearing away the body of the dead, had started, the King, sitting at one of the windows of the palace, and observing a shower that was pouring down in torrents upon Versailles, said with a smile, both sadly and jokingly, "The Marchioness will have bad weather for her journey."

Cornelius Janson pinxt.
Geo. Vertue Sculpsit
The Right Honourable Elisabeth Lady CAVENDISH
Widow of Sr. WILLIAM CAVENDISH and Countess of Shrewsbury

BESS OF HARDWICK.

BESS OF HARDWICK, COUNTESS OF SHREWSBURY

(1518—1608)

THOMAS SECCOMBE

ELIZABETH TALBOT, Countess of Shrewsbury, known as "Bess of Hardwick," born in 1518, was the fourth daughter of John Hardwick of Hardwick, Derbyshire, the sixth squire of the name who possessed the estate. Her mother was Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Leake of Hasland in the same county.

The "beautiful and discreet" Elizabeth was married at fourteen years of age to Robert Barlow of Barlow, near Dronfield, son and heir of Arthur Barlow by a sister of Sir John Chaworth of Wyverton. The name is often given as Barley of Barley, by which it is probable that the pronunciation is indicated. The bridegroom also was very young, and died soon after the marriage, on Feb. 2, 1533, but his large estate was settled upon his widow and her heirs. She remained a widow until 1549, when on August 20, at Bradgate, in Leicestershire, a seat of the Marquis of Dorset, she became the third wife of Sir William Cavendish. According to a manuscript memorandum in Cavendish's own hand, the marriage was celebrated "at 2 of the clock after midnight." Sir William had so great an affection for his third wife that "on her desire he sold his estate in

the southern parts of England to purchase lands in Derbyshire where her kindred lived." From some of her relatives he purchased the estate of Chatsworth, and began there the noble manor-house which, upon his death (Oct. 25, 1557), he left his widow to finish. By her second husband alone had Bess of Hardwick any issue; of these, six arrived at maturity, three sons and three daughters, and two of the sons afford a noteworthy example of two brothers founding two several dukedoms, those of Devonshire and Newcastle.

Lady Cavendish took to her third husband Sir William St. Loe (variously spelt St. Lo and St. Lowe) of Tormarton, Gloucestershire, a gentleman of ancient knightly family in Somerset, who was captain of the guard to Queen Elizabeth. He was the possessor of "divers fair lordships in Gloucestershire, which in articles of marriage she took care should be settled on her and her own heirs in default of issue by him." When not in attendance at Court, St. Loe resided at Chatsworth. His wife obtained unbounded influence over him, and his family charged her, not without reason, with making an improper use of her influence. It is certain that upon his death, "she lived to enjoy his whole estate, excluding his former daughters and brothers."

In the third widowhood, says Bishop White Kennett, "she had not survived her charms of wit and beauty, by which she captivated the then greatest subject of the realm, George Talbot, sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, whom she brought to terms of the greatest honour and advantage to herself and children; for he not only yielded to a considerable jointure, but to an union of families, by taking Mary Cavendish, her

youngest daughter, to wife of Gilbert Talbot, his second son, and afterwards his heir; and giving the Lady Grace Talbot, his youngest daughter, to Henry Cavendish, her eldest son. The double nuptials for which she thus stipulated before she would give her hand to Shrewsbury were solemnised at Sheffield on Feb. 9, 1567-68, and it is probable that her own marriage took place shortly afterwards. The Queen heartily approved the match, and it was in the following December (1568), that she decided to confide the custody of Mary Queen of Scots. The Countess assisted her husband in the reception of Mary at Tutbury on Feb. 2, 1569. Five years later, in October, 1574, while Margaret, Countess of Lennox, and her son Charles (the younger brother of Darnley) were on their way from London to Scotland, the Countess of Shrewsbury entertained them at Rufford. During their five days' sojourn a match was rapidly arranged by the wily hostess between young Charles and her daughter, Elizabeth Cavendish, and the pair were actually married next month, much to the indignation of the Queen. Shrewsbury, in an exculpatory letter to Burghley, with more truth than gallantry, threw the blame exclusively upon his Countess. "There are few noblemen's sons in England," he wrote, "that she hath not praid me to dele forre at one tyme or other; so I did for my lord Rutland, with my lord Sussex, for my lord Wharton and sundry others; and now this comes unlooked for without thankes to me."

In order to cool this unruly ambition, Elizabeth sent the Countess to the Tower soon after Christmas, but she was allowed to join her husband some three months later. In

1575 her daughter became mother of Arabella, who was afterwards well known as Arabella Stuart. Early in 1582, upon the death of her daughter, Elizabeth Stuart, the Countess wrote several letters on behalf of her orphaned grand-daughter, Arabella, to Burghley and Walsingham, being specially anxious to get her maintenance raised from £200 to £600 a year. She was at first genuinely attached to her grandchild, but she had completely alienated her by her tyranny before March, 1603, when Arabella was removed from Hardwick to the care of Henry Grey, sixth Earl of Kent, and was disinherited by a codicil to her grandmother's will. Shrewsbury was relieved of his charge of the Scottish Queen in 1584, not before he had been taunted by his wife with making love to his captive. Fuller records that at Court upon one occasion, when the Queen demanded how the Queen of Scots did, the Countess said: "Madam, she cannot do ill while she is with my husband, and I begin to grow jealous, they are so great together." It is most probable that the Countess simulated a jealousy which she did not feel in order to prejudice the Queen against her husband.

A more genuine cause for conjugal discord was the injurious ascendency which the Earl allowed a female domestic, named Eleanor Britton, to obtain over him during his later years. But the Countess allowed no vexations of this sort to interfere with the vigorous administration of her vast estates, estimated as worth £60,000 a year (in modern currency). Her extraordinary zeal as a builder was attributed, says Walpole, to a prediction that she should not die as long as she was building. In addition to the fine Elizabethan

mansion at Chatsworth (replaced by the well-known Palladian structure of the late Seventeenth Century), she built the seats of Oldcotes, Worksop, and Bolsover, and, after the Earl of Shrewsbury's death in 1590, she set to work upon a new Hardwick Hall, within a few hundred yards of the ancient seat of her family, which remained standing. Over the chimney-piece in the dining-room are still to be seen her arms and initials dated 1597 (the year of the completion of the work); while the letters "E. S." appear in most of the rooms, with the triple badge of Shrewsbury, Cavendish, and Hardwick.

At Hardwick she spent the days of her fourth widowhood in abundant wealth and splendour, feared by many, and courted by a numerous train of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She was very ill in April, 1605, when her grand-daughter Arabella ventured down to Hardwick to see her, armed with a letter from the King, on the strength of which "Bess grudgingly bestowed a gold cup and three hundred guineas" upon her former favourite. "A woman of masculine understanding and conduct," concludes Lodge; "proud, furious, selfish, and unfeeling, she was a builder, a buyer and seller of estates, a money-lender, a farmer, and a merchant of lead, coals, and timber; when disengaged from these employments, she intrigued alternately with Elizabeth and Mary, always to the prejudice and terror of her husband."

She lived to a great age, immensely rich, continually flattered, but seldom deceived, and died ("in a hard frost while her builders could not work") on Feb. 13, 1608, at

her seat of Hardwick. She was buried in the Cavendish mausoleum in the south aisle of All Hallows Church, Derby, where is a splendid mural monument to her memory. This "she took good care to erect in her own lifetime." In a recess in the lower part is the figure of the Countess, with her head reclined on a cushion and her hands uplifted in the attitude of prayer.

At Hardwick Hall are two paintings of the Countess. One represents her in early life in a close-fitting black dress, with rich brown hair. The other (of which a copy is in the National Portrait Gallery) was painted by Cornelius Janssen, when she was well stricken in years, but still retained traces of beauty; the expression of countenance is clearly indicative of shrewdness, energy, and strength of purpose. The second portrait was engraved by George Vertue.

GABRIELLE D'ESTREES.

GABRIELLE D'ESTRÈES

(About 1571—1599)

CHARLES AUGUSTIN SAINTE-BEUVE

MADAME GABRIELLE was the fifth of six daughters, all of whom created a sensation in the world. Her brother was the Marquis de Cœuvres, afterwards Maréchal d'Estrées. He was a man of much penetration and shrewdness, a gay fellow, and so clever and intriguing that he made all the warriors and negotiators appear blockheads.

One of her sisters was Abbesse de Maubuisson, whose unbridled conduct rendered her so celebrated. Gabrielle came between this brother and sister; she appears not to have possessed so much talent as her brother, or to have been quite so ill-regulated as her sister the abbess; but we must not be too eager to scrutinise her conduct during those early years which preceded her acquaintance with Henry IV.

This Prince saw her in Picardy about 1591, at the time he was carrying on a war in the environs of Rouen and Paris. He formed almost a little capital at Mantes, and from thence he flew to Mademoiselle d'Estrées for diversion, or else induced her father to take her to Mantes, but the bustle there was a source of annoyance to them. Bellegarde, who had introduced Gabrielle to the King, soon repented that he

had done so; the jealousy and rivalry of the servant and master have been tolerably described in the history of Henry IV.'s amours, which was written by a person living at the period, Mademoiselle Guise, afterwards Princess de Conti.

Henry IV.'s passion for Gabrielle seems to have gone through many different stages; at its commencement it appears to have been of rather a coarse nature. In order to emancipate M. d'Estrées's daughter from restraint, the King thought the best thing was to marry her to a gentleman of Picardy, M. de Liancourt. It has been asserted that he promised to go to her deliverance before the end of the wedding-day; however, he did not keep his promise. The marriage was not considered very binding, however, and the King, as soon as he could, endeavoured to dissolve it. He recognised and legitimated the three children that he had successively by Madame de Liancourt. From this connection sprang the Vendômes, a valiant and dissolute race, of which many members followed the original example both in irregularities and deeds of prowess.

While Henry IV. was away from Paris, making war in order to recover his kingdom, his amours with Gabrielle had not become a matter of state interest. At most the King's faithful servants and companions might occasionally complain, not without a cause, that he prolonged unnecessarily these expeditions and sieges in the neighbourhood of his mistress's residence, but when Henry entered Paris and became King of his rights, all the details of his conduct began to assume an air of importance, and Madame de Liancourt began to occupy the Parisians' attention.

The *Estoile,* which was the echo of the lawyers' opinions, as well as that of the bourgeoisie, observes, " that on Tuesday, September the 13th, 1594, the King came secretly to Paris, and returned the next day in his coach to Saint Germain-en-Laye, accompanied only by Madame de Liancourt. At his solemn entry into Paris, at torchlight, on the 15th of September, the King passed over the Pont de Nôtre Dame on horseback, about eight o'clock in the evening. He was accompanied by a large body of cavalry, and was surrounded by the flower of the nobility." He wore a smiling face and was quite delighted to hear the people shout joyfully, " God save the King! "

He had his hat in his hand continually, especially when he saluted the ladies, who were gazing from the windows. Madame de Liancourt was some little distance before him, in a magnificent uncovered litter loaded with pearls and precious stones, so brilliant that they quite paled the light of the torches; she was attired in a dress of black satin ornamented with white trimmings. This account shows us that from the time of his entry into his reconquered capital, Gabrielle was placed on the footing of a queen, and already affected the airs of royalty.

For Gabrielle to have maintained such a position for more than four years without any decrease, but, on the contrary, with increase of favour, there must in reality have been a conjugal interregnum. Queen Margaret, Henry's first wife, was now so only in name. She was banished to her Château d'Usson in Auvergne. The sole thing to be done was to get her to agree as to the form of dissolving, as amicably as pos-

sible, this ill-assorted union, a union which had on both sides been held in little regard.

Henry IV. was therefore an acknowledged widower for this number of years; the public declaration was only wanting, which, since his conversion, could not well be long delayed. From this plausible circumstance it was that Gabrielle contrived to hold such a position at Court; she filled up a void; for few have imagined that she aspired in reality to the dignity itself. However, she gradually gained greater favour, and the King became attached to her both from habit as well as from years. She advanced a step with each new child with which she presented him. She relinquished the name of Liancourt, and became Marquise de Monceaux about March, 1595; then in July, 1596, she was created Duchesse de Beaufort. She was called simply Madame la Marquise, in the first instance, and afterwards merely Madame la Duchesse; thus by degrees she ascended to still greater good fortune. The chief president of the Parliament in Normandy, Groulard, informs us in his curious *Memoirs,* how far she was treated as a princess by the King, and how she was presented by him to the most learned magistrates, as a person to whom homage was due.

Henry IV. went to Rouen to be present at the Assembly of Notables. It was here that he made the following celebrated harangue, which was at once blunt, military, and to the purpose: "I have not summoned you, as my predecessors did, to induce you to approve of my intentions. I have assembled you that I might receive the benefit of your counsels; to give ear to them, and to follow them; in short,

I desire to place myself under your guidance; a desire which is seldom felt by kings, greybeards, and conquerors; but the immense love I bear my subjects," etc., etc. He made this harangue in the hall of the house where he took his abode, and insisted upon having Madame la Marquise's opinion, for which purpose she concealed herself behind some tapestry. The King asked her what she thought of this address, to which she replied she had never heard anything better; only she had been very much surprised when he talked of placing himself under their guidance. "*Ventre saint gris!*" exclaimed the King, "very likely, but I meant with my sword at my side."

During this sojourn at Rouen, the Marquise gave birth to a daughter, at the monastery of Saint-Ouen, and her baptism was celebrated with all the ceremony of the children of the House of France.

The first few years which followed Henry IV.'s entry into his capital were not as prosperous as might be supposed; after the bursts of joy for deliverance, fears soon began to be experienced. Though the civil war was brought to a conclusion, the contest with Spain grew more violent in the heart of the kingdom, nay, even in the provinces near Paris. Unfortunate seasons, heavy rains, and contagious diseases, served to increase the already many forebodings, and to infect the imagination of the people in general. The ballets, masquerades, and banquets, which were given at Court, and at which the ladies appeared covered with precious stones, in the most extravagant costumes, formed a strange contrast to the surrounding misery. To these entertain-

ments Gabrielle gave the *ton*: "On Saturday, the 12th of November, 1594, a handkerchief was displayed by an embroiderer of Paris, which had just been completed for Madame de Liancourt; she was to wear this handkerchief the next day at the ballet; and was to pay the enormous sum of nineteen hundred crowns for it, and ready money." The few particulars that we gather from the *Estoile* concerning Gabrielle's dresses and ornaments are not at all exaggerated: an historical account was published some years ago of an inventory of her furniture and of her wardrobe. This inventory is still preserved among the royal archives: nothing can be comparable to the magnificence, the luxury, the refined extravagance in art, which was to be observed in all that surrounded Gabrielle, both as to her furniture, and as to her attire. When she rode on horseback, she preferred to wear green. "On Friday, the 17th of March, 1595," says the *Estoile,* "there was a terrific storm of thunder and lightning, during which the King was in the neighbourhood hunting with his Gabrielle (lately created Marquise de Monceaux) by his side. She was mounted on horseback like a man, dressed entirely in green, and returned to Paris with him in the same style." In the inventory of Gabrielle's wardrobe, the description of this elegant kind of riding-habit may be seen, which gives, perhaps, some notion of that to which the *Estoile* alludes: "A hood and riding petticoat of violet-coloured satin, embroidered with silver, and trimmed here and there with silver lace upon a ground-work of green satin; the hood lined with green gauffred satin. The aforesaid riding petticoat was lined with violet-coloured taffetas;

the hat was also of violet-coloured taffetas, and trimmed with silver, valued at two hundred crowns."

At the baptism of the Constable's son, for whom the King stood godfather (March 5, 1597), the Marquise was present, magnificently attired in a costume entirely green, and the King amused himself in arranging her head-dress, telling her that she had not enough brilliants in her hair—she had only twelve, and he said she ought to have had fifteen.

We must judge of the style of Gabrielle's beauty by the general impression it created at the time; this will help us to form some idea of her attractions in spite of the stiff and cumbrous dress in which her portraits represent her. She had a fair and clear complexion; light hair threaded with gold, which she wore turned back in a mass, or else in a fringe of short curls; she had a fine forehead, a delicately-shaped and regular nose, a pretty little rosy smiling mouth, and a winning and tender expression of countenance; her eyes were full of vivacity, and soft and clear. She was a thorough woman in all her tastes, in her ambition, and even with regard to her defects. She was very agreeable and had very good natural abilities, though she was not at all learned, and the only book found in her library was her prayer-book. Without exactly occupying herself with politics, she had some penetration, and when her heart prompted her, her mind readily seized upon some things.

One day (March, 1597) after dinner, the King went to visit his sister, Madame Catherine, who was ill. Madame had remained a Protestant, and in order to relieve her weariness, therefore, a psalm was chaunted to the accompaniment

of the lute, according to the custom of the Calvinists. The King, without reflecting, began to sing psalms with the others, but Gabrielle, who was sitting next to him, immediately perceived how much mischief might be manufactured out of this imprudence by any malignant person, and hastily placed her hand over his mouth, entreating him not to sing any longer, to which solicitation he directly yielded.

In spite of all the pains she took to conciliate the people of Paris, she found great difficulty in the task, and when, in the height of festivity of Mid-Lent, it suddenly became known that Amiens was surprised by the Spaniards, great was the public indignation. Henry IV., turning towards the Marquise, who was crying, said to her: "My beloved mistress, we must lay down our arms here awhile, and just mount our horses and wage another war," and he hurried away to repair by resolution and courage the slight check which he had sustained. It should be observed that Gabrielle quitted Paris in her litter an hour before him, as she did not feel safe the moment the King had left the city, for she was accused of having turned the King's attention from business, and of having lulled him in pleasure: the same sentiments were entertained towards her in Paris after the taking of Amiens, as those which were created by Madame de Pompadour after Rosbach.

At the beginning of the year 1599, Gabrielle was apparently near being raised to the dignity of Queen; for she was again on the point of becoming a mother. From the moment her hopes of advancement began to increase, she grew particularly courteous and officious in attention to all, so much so,

indeed, that those who were determined not to like her could not dislike her. "It is really astonishing," confesses the satirical D'Aubigné himself, "how this woman, whose beauty had no tincture of earth in its character, has been able to live more like a queen than a mistress for so many years with so few enemies." It was one of Gabrielle's extraordinary charms, as well as really one of her arts, to possess the power of investing this equivocal and unblushing mode of life with a kind of dignity, nay, almost with an air of decency.

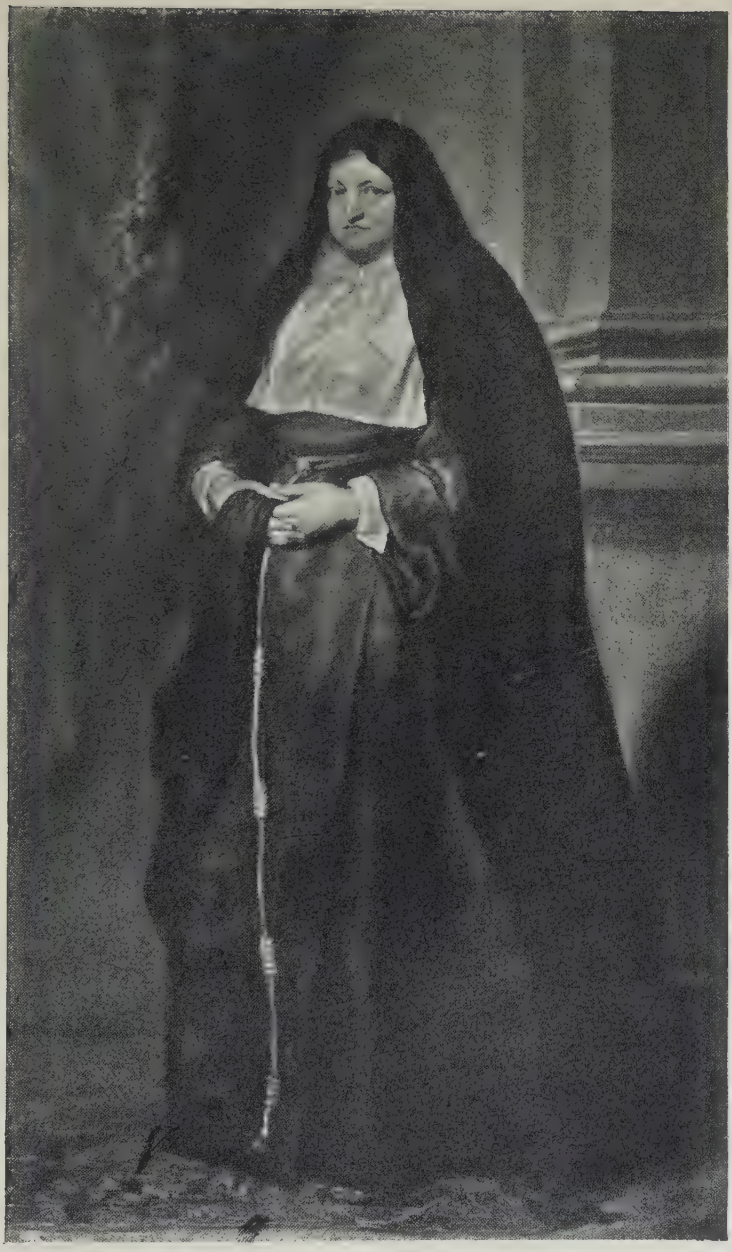
The rest of Gabrielle's history is well known. She left the King at Fontainebleau to go to Paris, in order to perform her devotions during Holy Week; and proceeded to the house of an Italian financier, Zamet, who lived near the Bastille. On Holy Thursday, after dinner, she went to hear the musical service of the Tenebræ, at the Petit-Sainte Antoine. She felt herself suddenly indisposed before the service was over, and returned to Zamet's; as her illness increased, she was anxious at once to leave the house, and to be taken to the residence of her aunt, Madame de Sourdis, near the Louvre. She was alternately seized with convulsions and with symptoms of apoplexy, which in a few hours quite altered her appearance. They announced her death, indeed, before she breathed her last: she expired during the Friday night, on the 9th or 10th of April, 1599.

ISABELLA OF AUSTRIA

(1566—1633)

CHARLES LOUIS DE SEVELINGES

ISABELLA CLARA EUGENIA of Austria, daughter of Philip II. of Spain and Elizabeth of France, was born in 1566. If ever a princess seemed destined to ascend the throne of France, assuredly it was the subject of this sketch, yet she never succeeded in reaching it. She was only eighteen years old when her father, the King, bending his religious scruples before politics, sent a proposal to the King of Navarre (afterwards Henry II.), to repudiate Marguerite de Valois in order to marry the young Infanta (1584). Mornay refused in Henri's name. " Do you know what you are doing? " he said to the Spanish envoys; " we are all ready for business." Words that revealed only too clearly in what spirit the proposition was made, and the need Spain had of a pretext to interfere in the League. The emissaries of Philip II. lost no time in taking off the masque. At the meetings in Soissons, they insinuated that, the Bourbons being excluded as heretics, the Salic law was also annulled, and that the throne belonged by right to the Infanta Isabella as the niece and nearest heir of Henry III. The Duc de Mayenne, whose dearest hopes were thwarted by that declaration, replied sharply to Mendoza: " Do you mistake the French



ISABELLA OF AUSTRIA.

for unfortunate Indians? You will never force them to submit to the yoke of a stranger; that would be *too bitter a pill.*" The *Seize* proved that their heart was no longer French; for a letter from this faction to Philip II., dated September 20, 1591, begged him to reign over France, either in his own name, or in that of his daughter, the Infanta.

The Spanish ministers now hastened to declare that if the Infanta was recognised as Queen by right of birth, a husband should be chosen for her among the nobles of the kingdom. Without saying anything more precise, the Cabinet of Madrid flattered itself that it would excite many ambitions. Three pretenders now came upon the scene: the Duc de Nemours, half-brother of the Duc de Mayenne; the Duc de Guise, brother of him who had perished at Blois; and the young Cardinal de Bourbon, nephew of him whom the League had recognised for a short time as King under the name of Charles X.

It was under these circumstances that the Parliament of Paris, so long severed by factions, seemed to recover suddenly all its independence and energy. It issued that celebrated decree (June 28, 1593), that declared the Salic law a fundamental law of the monarchy and prohibited any treaty that would bring a foreign house upon the throne of our kings. Edward Molé, attorney-general, said to the Duc de Mayenne's face: "No Infanta, nor Infanta's husband! I am a true Frenchman; I will lose my life before that shall happen."

But soon the ministers of Philip II. returned to the matter.

Thinking to tempt with more franchise, they designated the Duc de Guise for Isabella's husband and demanded Brittany *en souveraineté* as the Infanta's dowry, stipulating that, if the Duke died without sons, his widow might marry any French nobleman of her choice. For several days the Duc de Guise held a royal court. This threatrical triumph lasted a short time: Mayenne, alarmed at being a subject of his own nephew, did everything he could to break up that fatal alliance. At first he thought he had found certain means in the exorbitant demands he addressed to the Spanish ministers; he exacted, for example, that Isabella should not be proclaimed Queen of France until after her marriage, and on a date fixed by himself; that if she died without children, the Crown should devolve by right upon the eldest of the Guises; and finally that they should give him, the Duc de Guise, sovereignty of Champagne and Bourgogne. To his great astonishment, the Court of Madrid consented to everything.

The Infanta was about to arrive; Mayenne resorted to a ruse. He presented himself before the League and told them solemnly to recognise Isabella; but immediately one of his confederates observed that before proclaiming the new Queen, an army must be created for her to oppose that of Henry IV. This remark was unanimously approved. The States of the League assembled in the Louvre in the greatest pomp: the ministers of Philip II. were invited to the meeting (July 4, 1593). They were entreated in the most lofty terms to thank their sovereign for all he had undertaken in the interests of the League; but charged them, at the same time, to declare to him that the situation of affairs would not permit them

to dream of the inauguration of his daughter, the Princess. The Spanish ambassadors replied, with a feigned indifference, that their sovereign had never had anything in view but the welfare of France, and that the only regret he would experience would be that of not having assured this permanently.

Thus many years of effort and political combinations ended in a scene of comedy. This ridiculous affair did not escape the authors of the famous *Satire Ménippée*. In the caricature of the Parliament of Paris the portrait of the *League's Betrothed,* that is to say the Infanta herself, was suspended over the head of the President. Above the portrait, the following lines, containing a double epigram, were written:

"Pourtant si je suis brunette,
Amy, n'en prenez émoy;
Car autant aimer souhaitte
Qu'une plus blanche que moy."

The swarthy complexion of the Princess and her age, which, however, was only twenty-eight or thirty, were never forgotten in the satires or discourses of which she was the subject. They never spared her in their raillery; they went so far as to spread, in not at all veiled terms, the report that the Infanta was loved by her father with a love that was not paternal. It is certain that Philip II. never ceased showing her such affection and confidence that this Prince, who delighted in being *mysterious,* initiated his daughter into the most intimate secrets of his government. "She was," says Brantôme, "a Princess of an agreeable mind, who attended to all her father's business affairs and was often very much exhausted by it: he also cherished her dearly."

On his deathbed this monarch called Isabella the "mirror and the light of his eyes." Nevertheless, sacrificing his pleasure for his ambition, we see him constantly occupied in trying to send his daughter away from his side. As it was the destiny of the Princess to be merely a political tool in the hands of her father, as soon as Philip II. lost the hope of placing her on the throne of France, he tried to use her as an instrument for the submission of Holland, which he despaired of reducing by force. For two years he had given the government of the Belgian provinces to the Cardinal Archduke Albert. He obtained a dispensation for him to marry the Infanta, who received the sovereignty of the Low Countries and Franche-Comté (1597). Philip thought he would pacify the insurgents by this means, who would no longer object to the Spanish government; but his hopes were vain and the war continued as furiously as ever. Isabella followed her husband to the war. Money was lacking for the payment of the troops, and they revolted. The Infanta rode through the lines and offered them her diamonds to satisfy them. She was present at the famous siege of Ostende; despairing of the long resistance of that town, it is said that she made a vow not to change her linen until she was mistress of that place. It is not known at what date the Infanta made this singular vow; but as the siege lasted three years, three months, and three days, it is not astonishing that the linen worn by the Princess should have acquired that fawn colour which is still called by her name, *"couleur Isabelle."*

The Archduke Albert died in 1621; Philip IV., who

ascended the throne in the same year, deprived his aunt of the sovereignty of the Low Countries and only left her the title of governor. Although she took the veil, she did not relax her firm hold upon the reins of the administration. She organised a powerful army to resist the Prince of Orange (Frederick Henry), who, by the seizure of Bois-le-Duc, had thrown consternation into Brabant. She was on the point of concluding a long truce with him, when Cardinal Richelieu, who would never allow the House of Austria time to breathe, broke off the negotiations (1629).

Although the Infanta was respected and even loved by the people she governed, they formed (by the intrigues of Richelieu, it is said), a great conspiracy to turn the Roman Catholic Low Countries into an independent republic. The conspirators imagined that they could put to sleep the vigilance of a princess of sixty-six years, whom they thought was absorbed in religious devotions. Their attempt was frustrated: Isabella penetrated their plots and baffled them by means of her prudence and firmness. In the same year (1632), she received in Brussels Queen Marie de' Medici, who was obliged to flee from France. Isabella offered mediation with Louis XIII., who refused. She died a few months later in 1633. The virtues of this Princess have been praised even by Protestant writers.

CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN

(1626—1689)

JOHN DORAN

WHEN Christina of Sweden, after she had resigned the throne, addressed herself to the task of writing her own life, she commenced her autobiography with the remark that, except Charles XI., then reigning, she was the only living being who had any right to the Swedish Crown. The remark was characteristic of the author. Despite her abdication, she never made entire surrender of her right.

Her birth, at Abo, on December 8, 1626, put the astrologers to shame. They had foretold that a son would be born to the great Gustavus Adolphus, and that matters would go ill with mother and child. The prophecy failed in every point. "She will be a clever girl," said Gustavus, "for she has already deceived every one of us."

Christina was but a child when, by the death of the great Gustavus, she became Queen (or *King,* for the old Swedes, like the Hungarians, applied the latter title to female sovereigns), of Sweden. She remembered little more of her accession than the delight she experienced at seeing so many grand people kissing her hand. The peasants, too, had their share in *consenting* to receive her as Queen. The little lady was introduced to a body of them, and their chief, Lars

CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN.

Larsson, after examining her closely—never having seen her before—exclaimed: "Yes, I recognise the nose, eyes, and forehead of Gustavus Adolphus. *Let her be Queen.*"

In the fragment of her autobiography, she confesses that she soon forgot her father; and she avows that the long and weary speeches of congratulation to which she was obliged to listen gave her more annoyance than her father's death.

The Queen Dowager mourned for her lost husband in a very characteristic fashion. She shut herself within her apartment, which was hung, ceiled, and carpeted with black. The light of day was excluded; and beneath the lamps suspended from the roof, the disconsolate widow lay, laughing till her sides ached, at the jests of the buffoons and the drolleries of the dwarfs, by whom the apartment was crowded.

Educated by men, and under the guardianship of men like Oxenstierna and his colleagues, Christina imbibed a hatred of all that was womanly. She swore like a dragoon. She was passionate, proud, revengeful; but her application to study was wonderful, and the success more wonderful still, even when an application of twelve hours a day is taken into account. The difficulty would be to say what she did not know; and of half of what she *had* acquired, she was herself the teacher.

The affairs of her own kingdom were indeed admirably conducted during her minority by Oxenstierna, eminent as both warrior and statesman. With such success was his policy carried out that, in 1648, she may be said to have almost dictated the Peace of Westphalia, which commenced a new era and a new system in Europe.

The Senate nobly carried out her father's views with respect to her education. Noble ladies, sage men, skilful instructors surrounded her. She learned the dead languages as easily as the living—and by the same simple means—not merely by grammar and dictionary, but colloquially.

After the Treaty of Westphalia had secured, for a while, the tranquillity of Sweden, Christina was crowned, under circumstances of more than ordinary rejoicing, in 1650. She then named as her successor Charles Gustavus, son of the Pfalzgraf John Casimir and Catherine, sister of Gustavus Adolphus.

Among the greatest glories of this celebrated Queen was the founding of the University of Abo, in Finland. She invited, and that at a great cost, to her aid, as well as for her own intellectual entertainment, great scholars from all countries; Grotius and Descartes, Salmasius, Vossius, Nicholas Heinsius, Comingius, Freinshemius, and others not less celebrated, gave splendour and dignity to a Court where the Muses were as much in favour as deeds of arms.

Her liberality, however, extended to extravagance, and she was prodigal in laying out money, even on worthless objects. The nation bore silently with the faults of the daughter of Gustavus. The people became more discontented and less reserved in manifesting their displeasure, when they observed the closeness of their intercourse with Romanists—particularly with the French doctor Bourdelot and the Spanish ambassador Pimentelli. Both were deeply in her confidence; but while she trusted Bourdelot she was first led, then commanded, by the Spaniard. Her close intimacy

with the latter was complete, and it excited against her the indignation, not unmingled by compassion, of those who loved the daughter of Gustavus, but who saw the abyss into which she was descending. She resolutely refused to contract any matrimonial engagement, although several princely suitors offered themselves to woo a lady who would not be won—in *that* fashion.

There were many men at her Court, scholars, philosophers, poets, artists, and others, whose presence would have added glory to any throne; but with them there were the two already mentioned, Doctor Michon, who assumed the name of his more celebrated uncle, Bourdelot, and Pimentelli, the Spanish ambassador; and these men, the first openly licentious and the second darkly designing, caused her to forfeit the good opinion of her subjects, and brought her to the point at which she saw, or affected to see, that her safest course was to abdicate, whether she regarded her pleasures or her duty. She fancied that she might fulfil both all the easier by such a course.

At length the 10th of June, 1654, arrived. As if to show her impatience for the coming of that day, the Queen appeared before the Senate at seven o'clock in the morning. In the presence of all assembled, she signed the deed of resignation, after it had been read aloud; subsequent to which, the deed securing to her her revenue and landed property was also read and signed.

Christina then arose. The crown was on her brow. The royal mantle hung from her shoulders. The sceptre was still grasped by one hand; in the other she held the symbolic

orb. With a crowd of brilliant officials around her, and two officers at her side bearing the Sword of State and the Golden Key, Christina entered the great hall of the palace. It was completely filled by glittering nobles and ladies, in whose presence Christina took her seat upon a solid silver throne. Deputations from different States of the realm were also among the spectators. The acts signed in the Senate were then read aloud, and the hereditary Prince, whose chair was a little in the rear of the massive low throne occupied by the Queen, placed the acts in her hands. She let them lie in her lap for a moment. Then, feeling that all was over, or *should* be over, she stood erect, and made a sign with her hand to Count Brahé to approach and take the crown from off her head. The great official drew back, resolved not to perform such solemn service. Again the sign was made, but the Count only turned aside to conceal his emotion. Christina then raised her hands, lifted the crown from her brow, and held it in her extended hands, towards the Count, who now approached and received it, kneeling. She then stripped herself of all her remaining adornments, which were carried by officers present, and deposited upon a table near the throne. Christina was left standing in a simple dress of white taffeta. She advanced a few steps, and spoke during a full half-hour on the past struggles and glory of Sweden, and on its prospects. She spoke eloquently, gracefully, touchingly. The whole assembly was drowned in tears and admiration at beholding such a sight, and hearing such sentiments—a Queen in the prime of life voluntarily surrendering power, and testifying by her speech her worthiness to retain it.

Sundry complimentary addresses followed from members of the Senate, nobles, and from Charles Gustavus, who even went so far as to persuade her to resume the symbols of royalty which she had just laid down. Christina smiled, shook her head, and all present, having kissed her hand, she was conducted by Charles Gustavus to her private apartments. There was a pretty struggle on the occasion, but Charles, with gentle restraint, led her on his right, and leaving her at the door of her chamber, proceeded to the Cathredal, where he was crowned.

In the evening, although the rain descended in torrents, she announced her intention of quitting Upsal. Her friends remonstrated with her. "I cannot rest here," said Christina, "where I was so lately a crowned sovereign." She accordingly went; and on her arrival at Stockholm declared her intention of repairing to Spa, for the purpose of drinking the waters, with a view of invigorating her shattered health. She left Sweden accordingly, after taking hasty leave of her mother, the Queen Dowager, at Nikoping. Escorts by land and convoy by sea were placed at her disposal, but she escaped from, rather than refused all, and Christina began her career of errant-lady.

Chénut reports that when Christina had arrived at the little rivulet which then divided Sweden from territory belonging to Denmark, she descended from her carriage and jumped across the boundary. On alighting on the other side, she exclaimed: "At length! here I am, at liberty, and out of Sweden; may I never return thither!"

In male attire and under the name of "the son of the

Count of Dolna," Christina journeyed onward. Her progress excited great curiosity, although she herself fancied that it was unobserved. It may be said rather, that she travelled in the guise of a foreign knight, for she traversed Denmark habited as a cavalier, with a red scarf, according to the Spanish fashion. In this way she rode into Hamburg.

Careless of what the public thought of her proceedings, and treating with disregard the proceedings of others, undertaken to do her honour and show her respect, Christina rode on in impudent independence. She passed through town after town, and seemed scarcely to see, and often, if compelled to see, ready to evince her contempt for, the orations got up out of delicate feeling, as if she were still a great sovereign, and not a clever lady.

While Christina was politically busy at this time in endeavouring to reconcile France and Spain, she was still more occupied with a more important and personal affair—her conversion.

She evaded searching questions addressed to her from Sweden; but continued her dissipated life—only withdrawing for a brief time from gaiety, on hearing of the deaths of her mother and Oxenstierna, the great statesman. Her eagerness to visit Rome became now irresistible, and she announced her wishes to the Pontiff, Alexander VII., whom she privately ridiculed for entertaining an opinion that he, the vainest and weakest of men, was the author of her conversion. The Holy Father expressed the joy he should feel at receiving such a visitor, but intimated that her welcome would depend

upon her first making a public confession of the Romish faith. This event which took place on the 3d of November, 1655, was accompanied by circumstances of great pomp and solemnity.

Some contemporary writers described the morals of the ex-Queen as not being according to her Christian profession, and licentiousness was laid to her charge, without being more satisfactorily answered than by complaint of the publication. This, however, did not affect the splendour and gaiety of her Court, or render her saloons less crowded by poets who be-rhymed her, artists who limned her, philosophers who received instruction from her, and scholars, like Kircher, who were brimful and overpouring, not only with valuable knowledge, but with matters that had been mastered by the painful application of years, and which were not worth the trouble even of remembering.

Towards the close of 1688, she received an anonymous letter which announced that her death was at hand, that she would do well to set her house in order, that she could not make a better commencement than by condemning to destruction the indecent paintings and statues with which her mansion was crowded. The sexagenarian lady, who had a taste for such furniture, smiled, and put the anonymous letter in the fire.

Soon after, she suddenly became dangerously ill; and almost as suddenly was convalescent. Her recovery fired Rome with a wild delight; but the joy was again suddenly turned into mourning. On the 19th of April, she had fulfilled all the offices required by the Church, and was lying

on her bed, surrounded by her little Court and a numerous company of priests. As noon commenced striking, she turned on her right side, placed her left hand under her neck, and as the iron tongue told the last of the twelve, the daughter of the great Gustavus, the murderess of Monaldeschi, was calmly sleeping the sleep of death.

MRS FITZHERBERT.

MRS. FITZHERBERT

(1756—1837)

JOHN FYVIE

THE *Morning Herald* of the 27th of July, 1784, presented its readers with the following by no means apparently important piece of Society intelligence:

"A new *constellation* has lately made an appearance in the *fashionable hemisphere* that engages the attention of those whose hearts are susceptible to the power of beauty. The widow of the late Mr. F—h—t has in her train half our young Nobility; as the lady has not, as yet, discovered a partiality for any of her admirers, they are all animated with hopes of success."

Little did the writer of this paragraph, or any of his readers, or even the new beauty herself, imagine what a strange destiny was reserved for her.

Although but twenty-eight years of age, the lady had been twice a widow. She was born in July, 1756, and was the youngest daughter of Walter Smythe, Esq., of Brambridge, in Hampshire, who was the second son of Sir John Smythe, Bart., of Eshe Hall, Co. Durham, and Acton Burnell Park, in Shropshire. Of her earlier days next to nothing is known. The only story on record relating to her childhood appears to be that, being taken by her parents to see Louis XV. eat his solitary dinner at Versailles, and seeing the King of

France pull a chicken to pieces with his fingers, the novelty of the exhibition struck her so forcibly, that, regardless of royal etiquette, she burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. Happily, the royal attention, thus directed to her, had no worse consequences than the offer of a dish of sugar plums, which the King sent her by one of his courtiers. In 1775, at the age of nineteen, she was married to Edward Weld, Esq., of Lulworth Castle, Dorsetshire. This gentleman died before the end of the same year. In 1778, she was again married, this time to Thomas Fitzherbert, Esq., of Swynnerton, Staffordshire, who, three years later, left her again a widow, with a jointure of £2,000 a year. She then took up her residence in a house on Richmond Hill, where she attracted, as the notice of the *Morning Herald* testifies, no small degree of general admiration.

Amongst the most ardent of her admirers was George, Prince of Wales, then a handsome and fascinating, but already dissipated young man of twenty-two, six years the lady's junior. For some time Mrs. Fitzherbert seems to have successfully repelled the Prince's advances; but, says her relative Lord Stourton, she was at length subjected to a species of attack so unprecedented and alarming that her resolution was shaken, and she was induced to take the first step which ultimately led to that union which the Prince so ardently desired, and for the sake of which he appeared ready to run any conceivable risk. One day, Lord Stourton informs us:

"Keit, the surgeon, Lord Onslow, Lord Southampton, and Mr. Edward Bouverie arrived at her house in the utmost consternation informing her that the life of the Prince was in imminent danger—

that he had stabbed himself—and that only *her* presence would save him. She resisted all their importunities, saying that nothing should induce her to enter Carlton House. She was afterwards brought to share in the alarm, but still, fearful of some stratagem derogatory to her reputation, insisted upon some lady of high character accompanying her as an indispensable condition. The Duchess of Devonshire was selected. The four drove from Park Street to Devonshire House, and took her along with them. She found the Prince pale and covered with blood. The sight so overpowered her faculties that she was deprived almost of all consciousness. The Prince told her that nothing would induce him to live unless she promised to become his wife, and permitted him to put a ring round her finger. I believe a ring from the hand of the Duchess of Devonshire was used upon the occasion, and not one of his own. Mrs. Fitzherbert being asked by me whether she did not believe that some trick had been practised, and that it was not really the blood of His Royal Highness, answered in the negative, and said she had frequently seen the scar, and that some brandy and water was near his bedside when she called to him on the day he had wounded himself."*

At the conclusion of this extraordinary scene, Mrs. Fitzherbert went home; and next day, regretting what she had been persuaded to do, she sent a letter of protest to Lord Southampton and left the country. For a time she travelled about in France and Switzerland, and made a stay of some length in Holland, where she lived on terms of intimacy with the Stadtholder and his family. It was one of life's little ironies that just at the time of her intimacy with this family the Princess of Orange was being negotiated for as a wife for the Prince of Wales, and she was subjected to a good deal of questioning as to what she knew of his character. The Prince, meanwhile, as we learn from Lord Holland, made no

* *Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert* (London, 1856).

secret of his passion and his despair at her leaving England for the Continent. He went down more than once to St. Anne's to talk with Fox and Mrs. Armitstead on the subject, and this lady describes him as crying by the hour, and testifying to the sincerity, or at any rate the violence, of his passion in the most extravagant way—by rolling on the floor, striking his forehead, tearing his hair, and swearing that he would abandon the country, forego the Crown, sell his jewels and plate, and scrape together a competence wherewith to fly with the object of his affections to America. At the same time he despatched courier after courier with letters to his inamorata, until she was induced first to promise that at least she would not marry any other person, and then, after being assured that his father would connive at their union, that she would marry him; "on conditions," says Lord Stourton, "which satisfied her conscience, though she could have no legal claim to be the wife of the Prince." She accordingly returned to England in December, 1785, and on the 21st of that month was married to the Prince of Wales in her own drawing-room, by a Protestant clergyman, in the presence of her uncle, Harry Errington, and her brother, Jack Smythe. The certificate of this marriage, Lord Stourton assures us, was in the handwriting of the Prince of Wales, and is still preserved; although some time afterwards, at the earnest request of the parties, Mrs. Fitzherbert cut off the names of the witnesses in order to save them from the possible penalties of the law.

In 1788, Mrs. Fitzherbert moved into a house in Pall Mall which had a private entrance into the grounds of Carlton House. Rumour, of course, was still busy; and on the

10th of October of that year the *Morning Post* was courageous enough to publish the following inquiry:

"*A Question.*—What is the reason that Mrs. Fitzherbert, who is a lady of fortune and fashion, never appears at Court? She is visited by *some* ladies of high rank—has been in public with them—and yet never goes to the Drawing Rooms at St. James's. The question is sent for publication by a person who pays no regard to the idle reports of the day, and wishes to have the mystery cleared up."

It is needless to say that this candid inquirer never received any answer, and the public was obliged to draw its own conclusions from the fact that, although the lady in question never appeared at Court, yet, wherever else the Prince of Wales might happen to be, there was Mrs. Fitzherbert also.

On the whole, she seems to have lived happily enough with the Prince up to the time of his marriage with Caroline of Brunswick in 1798, when she retired with an annuity of £6,000 a year. The unhappy marriage with the Princess Caroline was, according to Lord Holland, promoted by Lady Jersey and Lady Harcourt with a view of counteracting the influence of Mrs. Fitzherbert. That the Prince was, from first to last, strongly adverse to it is abundantly clear. He was always in pecuniary difficulties. The Duke of Wellington knew that on one occasion Mrs. Fitzherbert had been obliged to borrow money to pay for the Prince's post-horses to take him to Newmarket. He himself acknowledged to Lord Malmesbury, in 1792, that his debts then amounted to £370,000, and that he had recently had several executions in his house. And in Huish's *Memoirs of George the Fourth* there is a curious story of the pawning of the State jewels in

order to save Mrs. Fitzherbert from being arrested for a debt of £1,825. More money the Prince must have, and he consented to marry Caroline when he was assured that by so doing his actual income, exclusive of the sum set apart for the payment of his debts, should be raised to £100,000 a year. It was not the first time that his character was sacrificed to his embarrassments. Fox's formal denial, eight years previously, that any marriage ceremony had taken place with Mrs. Fitzherbert does not appear to have entirely removed all apprehensions on the subject. In spite of the Prince's public marriage to Queen Caroline, the belief in the sanctity of his previous private marriage still enabled Mrs. Fitzherbert to maintain her position in London society, and to draw all the fashionable world, including the Royal Dukes, to her parties. And it is even more strange that when, no long time after, the Prince desired to return to her, several members of the Royal Family, male and female, urged her to agree to a reconciliation. She agreed to abide by the decision of the Pope on the matter; and an envoy was sent to Rome to obtain his opinion. Her marriage with the Prince was held to be perfectly valid both as a contract and as a sacrament, in the eyes of the whole Catholic Church; and she was advised that she might return to live with him without blame. Whereupon she gave a breakfast at her own house " to the whole town of London " to celebrate the event. The ensuing eight years were, she always declared, the happiest of her connection with the Prince. She used to say that they were extremely poor, but as happy as crickets; and as a proof of their povery, she told Lord Stourton that once, on

their returning to Brighton from London, they mustered their common means, and could not raise £5 between them.

Soon after George IV.'s death, Mrs. Fitzherbert took occasion when William IV. was at Brighton to show him the certificate of her marriage and other papers relating to her connection with the late King. William IV., says Lord Stourton, expressed great surprise that she had shown so much forbearance, under the pressure of long and severe trials, when such documents were in her possession. He asked her what amends he could make; and offered to create her a Duchess. On her declining this honour, he authorised her to wear widow's weeds for his Royal brother, and insisted that she should always use the Royal livery. He also took an early opportunity to introduce her to his family, who ever after treated her as one of themselves. Thomas Raikes says that she maintained a very handsome establishment, both in Tilney Street and at Brighton; that she was very hospitable, and that her handsome dinners, services of plate, and numerous train of servants in the Royal livery, who had all grown old in her service, gave to her house at least a seigneurial, if not a Royal, appearance. And on the Continent her treatment was similar to that she received in England. Writing from Paris in December, 1833, she says:

"I have taken a very quiet apartment, and live very retired, seeing occasionally some friends. The Duke of Orleans came to see me the moment I arrived, with a thousand kind messages from the King and Queen, desiring me to go to them, which I accordingly have done. Nothing could exceed the kindness of their reception of me: they are old acquaintances of mine. . . . They have given me a general invitation to go there every evening whenever I like it, which suits me very much."

Previous to this Continental journey in 1833, she had determined with the cordial sanction of William IV., to destroy all papers relating to her connexion with the late King, excepting the marriage certificate, and one or two other documents, which she wished to preserve for the vindication of her character. An agreement for this purpose was drawn up. In pursuance of this agreement the Duke of Wellington met the Earl of Albemarle at Mrs. Fitzherbert's house in Tilney Street, on the 24th of August, for the purpose of destroying the condemned papers. "Some idea of the mass of manuscripts committed to the flames may be formed," says Lord Albemarle, "by an expression of the Duke to my father, after several hours' burning: 'I think, my lord, we had better hold our hand for a while, or we shall set the old woman's chimney on fire.'" The five documents to be preserved were made into a packet and deposited at Coutts's Bank, where, says Lord Albemarle (writing in 1877), they now remain: "They are declared to be 'the property of the Earl of Albemarle;' they are, however, not *my* property, but are held in trust by my brother Edward, as my father's executor."

We are, I think, justified in drawing the inference that, had they been the property of George Thomas, sixth Earl of Abemarle, he would have broken the seals, and made the public more fully acquainted with the contents of the packet. For what other purpose, indeed, were those papers so carefully preserved? On the 7th of December, 1833, Mrs. Fitzherbert wrote to Lord Stourton, her relative and co-religionist:

"I know I must have been a great torment to you, but I am sure the kind feelings of your heart will derive some gratification in having relieved me from a state of misery and anxiety which has been the bane of my life; and I trust, whenever it shall please God to remove me from this world, my conduct and character (in your hands) will not disgrace my family and my friends."

She died at Brighton the 29th of March, 1837, at the age of eighty-one, and was buried in the old Catholic Church there, in which will be found a handsome monument erected to her memory by the Hon. Mrs. Dawson Damer, to whom as the inscription declares, "she was more than a parent." No one who knew her has ever spoken harshly of her. Charles Greville's diary is much fuller of blame than of praise of any of his contemporaries, but of Mrs. Fitzherbert, on hearing of her death, he wrote: "She was not a clever woman, but of a very noble spirit, disinterested, generous, honest and affectionate, greatly beloved by her friends and relations, popular in the world and treated with uniform distinction and respect by the Royal Family." And even the Hon. Grantley Berkeley, whose four volumes of more or less unpleasant *Recollections* show him to have been almost constitutionally incapable of appreciating any but the lowest motives, is forced to admit that she was "so thoroughly amiable and good-natured that every one who came within the circle of her influence felt inclined to shut his or her eyes against any cognisance of her true position."

"I remember well [he says] her delicately fair, yet commanding features, and gentle demeanour. That exquisite complexion she maintained, almost unimpaired by time, not only long after the departure of youth, but up to the arrival of old age; and her manner, unaffected by years, was equally well preserved."

In spite of all her trials and disappointments, and her ultimate desertion by the Prince, she was singularly free from any trace of malignity or bitterness. She had a soul above all mercenary views, and never took advantage of her position of almost unbounded influence to enrich either herself or her relations. To the end she maintained her station in society, in defiance of intrigue and calumny. She discovered that the validity of her marriage was not such as to justify her in founding any public claim upon it, and she had too fine a sense of honour to use it, as an unscrupulous and vindictive woman could and undoubtedly would have done, for the extortion of money and honours, or perhaps even to secure her faithless Prince's exclusion from the throne. Princess of Wales she was not; but, as Lord Albemarle says, "as far as the laws of her Church could make her so," she was the wife of George, Prince of Wales.

Greville says that George IV. was always afraid lest Mrs. Fitzherbert should make use of the documents in her possession to annoy or injure him, and that he made various efforts to obtain possession of them. On one occasion he sent Sir William Knighton to Mrs. Fitzherbert for the purpose, and this confidential agent, although a stranger to her, called one day at her house, when she was ill in bed, insisted upon seeing her, and forced his way into her bedroom. He brought away nothing for all his pains; but it was this domiciliary visit, Greville says, which determined her to make a final disposition of all the papers she possessed, so that after her death no advantage might be taken of them, either against her own memory or the interests of any other

person. Had she been a mercenary woman, she might have obtained a large sum of money for these documents and the mass of correspondence which it was in her power to lay before the public. She used to say that she could have given the best public and private history of all the transactions of the country from the close of the American war down to the death of the Duke of York. All this valuable historical material the Duke of Wellington and Lord Albemarle were allowed to send up "the old woman's chimney." The sealed packet of papers in Coutts's Bank, however, was put there for the express purpose of being some day published for the vindication of Mrs. Fitzherbert's conduct and character.

HENRIETTE DE BALZAC D'ENTRAGUES

(1579—1633)

LÉON MARLET

CATHERINE HENRIETTE DE BALZAC D'ENTRAGUES, Marquise de Verneuil, was born in 1579, and died Feb. 9, 1633. Henry IV. fell in love with her in August, 1599, while visiting her father, the Comte d'Entragues, at his castle of Malesherbes. At that time, Henry was still deeply grieving over the death of Gabrielle d'Estrées, which had happened two months before, and was vainly seeking forgetfulness in incessant hunting. Being fascinated at their first meeting, Henry's mind was filled only with Henriette thenceforward. A true family of intriguers, daughter like father and father like daughter—let us also add: father and daughter like the mother, Marie Touchet, the ex-mistress of Charles IX., who indeed would have played the prude with a very ill grace,—had solicited the honour of receiving their sovereign with no other intention.

All that remained was to take the utmost possible advantage of the situation created by themselves, and this they did with incontestable ability. Henry IV. succeeded with the youthful beauty only by the payment of a sum of 100,000 crowns and, a far graver matter, a written promise

HENRIETTE DE BALZAC D'ENTRAGUES.

of marriage in good and due form if she should become *enceinte* within six months and afterwards bear a son. The interesting point in the matter is that at that very moment Henry's ambassadors were negotiating his union with Marie de Médicis, the niece of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. The first term of the contract was fulfilled within the stipulated time, but a premature confinement in June, 1600, relieved Henry of some of the difficulties into which his passion might have plunged him. It cost him his repose as a man, but at least his royal dignity was saved.

When the new queen was installed in the Louvre, Henriette, who had recently received the Marquisate of Verneuil, took it into her head to want to be presented to Marie. This was the beginning of the long period of tempests that transformed into a hell the private life of the *Vert-Galant,* the life that hitherto had been so sweet and gentle with Corisande and Gabrielle. Matters came to a head when, in the autumn of 1601, Marie de Médicis and Henriette d'Entragues each presented Henry with a son. Henriette exclaimed: "The Florentine has a son and I have the Dauphin. The King is my husband. I have his promise in my possession." And when Henry manifested a desire for the new-born child to be brought up at Saint-Germain with his other children, she insolently replied: "I don't wish him to associate with all those bastards." Out of spite, she entered into a conspiracy that had been formed against the King during the early days of her favour by the Duke of Savoy and Marshal Biron, and which was afterwards joined by her father and her half-brother, Charles de Valois, Comte

d'Auvergne. It is well known how this plot was discovered, how Biron paid for his ambition with the loss of his head, and how, thanks to the protection afforded them by Henriette's complicity in the affair, Auvergne and d'Entragues got off with a few weeks' imprisonment.

Unworthy as she was, Henry IV. always loved her. Let us do him this justice, however—he spared no efforts to break away from her, but could not succeed. He had only one remedy possible and that was to cure like with like, to replace the old mistress with a new one. From this period date his relations with Mademoiselle de Bueil, created Comtesse de Moret, and Mademoiselle des Essarts, made Comtesse de Romorantin, ephemeral connections which he only sought a pretext in order to break, being in haste to return to Henriette no matter what happened. In fact, it was with her alone that he could find the charm of conversation that he demanded quite as much as sensual indulgence. One day he spoke to Rosny in terms which form some slight excuse for the immorality of his domestic arrangements. Rosny's account of a typical scene is as follows: "The Queen was soon informed that the King had given Mlle. d'Entragues a promise of marriage, the original of which had been torn up by me, but another had been drawn up by the King; and she never ceased tormenting him till he had promised to get from his mistress this paper, which all ecclesiastics whom she consulted assured her was of no force. Henry, merely to oblige her, at length resolved to desire the Marquise to restore it; and he demanded it in a manner that showed he would not be refused.

" The Marquise de Verneuil, on the first intimation that it was expected she should resign the promise of marriage, threw herself into the most violent transport of rage imaginable, and told the King insolently that he might seek it elsewhere. Henry, that he might finish at once all the harsh things he had to say to her, began to reproach her for her plots with the Comte d'Auvergne, her brother, and the malcontents of the realm. She would not condescend to clear herself of this imputed crime, but assuming in her turn the language of reproach, she told him that it was not possible to live any longer with him; that as he grew old he grew jealous and suspicious, and that she would joyfully break off a connection for which she had been too ill rewarded to find anything agreeable in it, and which rendered her an object of public hatred.

She carried her insolence so far as to speak of the Queen in terms so contemptuous, that, if we may believe Henry, he was upon the point of striking her; and, in order that he might not be forced to commit such an outrage to decency, he was obliged to quit her abruptly, but full of rage and vexation, which he was at no pains to conceal, swearing that he would make her restore the promise that had raised this storm.

" Henry fell again upon the good qualities of his mistress when out of those capricious humours, and those sudden gusts of passion had subsided. He praised with a transport of delight the charms of her conversation, her sprightly wit, her repartees so poignant, yet so full of delicacy and spirit; and here indeed he had some foundation for his praises. The

Queen's temper and manners were so different that the contrast made him still more sensible of those charms in his mistress. 'I find nothing of all this at home,' he said to me. 'I receive neither society, amusement, nor content from my wife; her conversation is unpleasing, her temper harsh, she never accommodates herself to my humour, nor shares in any of my cares. When I enter her apartment and approach her with tenderness, or begin to talk familiarly with her, she receives me with so cold and forbidding an air that I quit her in disgust and am compelled to seek consolation elsewhere.'

"Henry's passion for Mademoiselle d'Entragues was one of those unhappy diseases of the mind, that, like a slow poison, preyed upon the principles of life. This Prince suffered all the insolence, the caprices, and inequalities of temper that a proud and ambitious woman is capable of showing.

"The Marquise de Verneuil had wit enough to discover the power she had over the King; and this power she never exerted but to torment him. They now seldom met but to quarrel."

In 1608, they were again reconciled, but only for a few months. In December, after many renewed quarrels, he finally sent the Marquise away; and she asked nothing better than to regain her liberty, as for the moment she had other dark schemes. In fact, she was deeply engaged in those intrigues with Spain in which we must seek the secret of the tragic end of Henry IV. Thanks to the success of the crime, neither she nor her accomplices, Epernon and the Guises,

were troubled. But impunity was her last triumph. She never attained her ardent desire to induce the Duke of Guise to marry her. She was forced to resign herself to retreat, and by the indulgence of gourmandism, in which she was exceedingly gross, to cheat that devouring thirst for that delicate incense that rises towards thrones.

SARAH, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH

(1660—1744)

W. C. TAYLOR

SARAH, "the viceroy over Queen Anne," as she was popularly designated, was the daughter of a country gentleman named Jennings, at whose seat, near St. Albans, she was born May 29, 1660. Her family had long been attached to the Court, and at an early age she was received into the household of the Duchess of York, to whom her sister, the celebrated Duchess of Tyrconnel, acted as lady of honour. Sarah Jennings was engaged as an attendant and playmate of the Princess Anne; and the friendship thus formed in youth survived for some years the accession of the latter to the throne.

While the charms of Sarah Jennings were the pride of the little circle formed round the Duchess of York, John Churchill, gentleman of the bed-chamber to the Duke, was not less celebrated for his personal attractions and elegance of manner among his compeers. An attachment was soon formed between him and Sarah, which was warmly encouraged by their royal patrons. She refused the admired Earl of Lindsay, afterwards Marquis of Ancaster, to link her fate with a young adventurer, who had scarce any inheritance but his sword; while Churchill had to resist the most

SARAH, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

urgent representations from his family to enrich himself by marriage with some heiress.

The youthful pair followed the Duke and Duchess of York, when the jealousies of the people of England, raised to a kind of madness by the calumnies and perjuries of Titus Oates, compelled them to go into a kind of voluntary exile. Their fidelity was rewarded by a peerage when the Duke ascended the English throne as James II., and Lord Churchill was regarded as one of the most rising statesmen of his age. He, however, was more anxious to retire into privacy and enjoy domestic felicity with his beautiful wife, than to pursue the dangerous paths of ambition; but Lady Churchill, who had renewed her intimacy with the Princess Anne, detained him at Court, and involved him in the complicated intrigues which finally led to the Revolution. Such was the friendship between Lady Churchill and the Princess, that, to avoid the encumbrance of title, they resolved to correspond under feigned names, her Royal Highness assuming the name of Morley, and Lady Churchill that of Freeman.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the misconduct and impolicy by which James II. alienated from his cause all parties in the British nation; nor to show how all parties, deceiving themselves and each other, brought public affairs into what the Americans call such "a pretty particular fix," that their only means of extrication was the elevation of William III. to the throne,—a political necessity to which all submitted, but which nearly all most cordially detested. Lady Churchill, on this occasion, induced the Princess Anne to desert the cause of her royal father. The ladies fled from

their apartments at the Cockpit; and having obtained the escort of that eminent member of the church militant, Compton, Bishop of London, proceeded to Nottingham, and thence to Chatsworth, the residence of the Earl of Devonshire. The prelate, who had in his early life been an officer of dragoons, rode before their carriage, with pistols at his saddle-bow and a drawn sword in his hand. Colley Cibber, who formed part of the escort that brought the ladies to Chatsworth, and afterwards waited upon them at table, records in his *Memoirs* that the beauty and grace of Lady Churchill made an impression on his mind which the lapse of fifty years had not effaced.

Though William created Lord Churchill Earl of Marlborough, he viewed that nobleman with mingled suspicion and dislike, feelings which were aggravated by the quarrel between Queen Mary and the Princess Anne. Marlborough and his wife adhered to the cause of the Princess; and the firmness with which she acted at the crisis was generally attributed to the spirited advice of the high-minded Countess. King William himself stood in awe of Lady Marlborough, whose cutting sarcasms were the more effective from the consciousness of their being merited; and at length he had recourse to the harsh measure of forbidding her the Court. The Princess Anne accompanied her injured favourite into retirement. They were received by the Duke of Somerset at Sion House, and had leisure to reflect on the ingratitude of the monarch whom they had helped to raise to the throne. Under these circumstances, Marlborough renewed his communications with the deposed King, and projected a con-

federacy to secure his restoration. The plot was discovered before it reached maturity. Marlborough was arrested and sent to the Tower; but as no evidence could be obtained against him, he was soon released. On the death of Queen Mary, King William was outwardly reconciled to his sister-in-law; the Princess Anne was invited to reside at St. James's, and the Earl of Marlborough was appointed chief preceptor to her son, the Duke of Gloucester, heir-apparent to the Crown. On the death of this Prince, the coolness between William and Anne again became manifest, and rapidly ripened into hostility. The result might have been a civil war in England, had not the death of King William placed Anne peacefully on the throne of England.

Marlborough, placed at the head of the English army during the War of the Spanish Succession, soon reached a height of military glory to which only one other English general ever attained. But while he was winning honours abroad, the imperious temper of his wife was overthrowing his influence in the cabinet. Not contented with being the equal of her sovereign, she affected to treat the Queen as a mere dependent, and even gave way to a fit of unruly temper when her husband was raised to a dukedom without her consent having been previously obtained. An anecdote related by herself curiously illustrates the strength of her passions. She had a beautiful head of hair, which her husband greatly admired: to vex him, on some trifling difference, she cut off her hair and laid it in some place likely to attract his notice. When she came to examine the result the hair had disappeared, nor was it known what had become of it until after

the Duke's death, when it was found carefully preserved in a cabinet in which he was accustomed to deposit his most precious treasures. The death of her only son, the Marquis of Blandford, at the age of seventeen, was a bitter affliction to the Duchess. It occurred at a time when her political enemies were assailing her with all the rancour which party spite could inspire, and when her insidious foe, Harley, was secretly undermining her in the Queen's favour. Still the connections she had formed by the marriages of her daughters gave her great political strength. Henrietta, the first and fairest, was united to Lord Malton, the eldest son of Lord Godolphin, then Prime Minister; Anne was married to Lord Spencer, son of the Earl and Countess of Sunderland; Elizabeth became by marriage Countess, and afterwards Duchess of Bridgewater; and Mary became the wife of Lord Monthermer.

The glorious victory of Blenheim seemed likely to confirm the ascendancy of the Marlboroughs; the Queen seemed anxious to encourage rather than repress the lavish gratitude of the nation to the conquerer; but at the same time the correspondence between Morley and Freeman was fast changing its friendly tone, and the Duchess soon perceived in the alteration that another power had acquired influence over the Queen's mind. The new favourite was Abigail Hill, afterwards Mrs. Masham, who had been introduced into the service of the Queen by the Duchess herself. The subservience of Abigail was, of course, more pleasing to the feeble mind of Anne than the despotism of Sarah. But Mrs. Masham had a still greater advantage: she favoured the political

prejudices of the Queen in favour of High Church principles, which the Duchess had vehemently opposed; and she was not indisposed to the cause of the Pretender, whom the Queen had recently begun to regard with the feelings of a brother. The ascendancy of the new favourite was first publicly shown on a strange occasion,—the death of the Queen's husband, Prince George of Denmark. Anne rather ostentatiously sought the consoling society of Mrs. Masham, and interposed all the difficulties of official etiquette between herself and the Duchess.

The trial of Dr. Sacheverel, who was impeached by the House of Commons for preaching a very foolish and intemperate sermon, raised a popular storm against the Whigs, who were stigmatised as enemies of the Church in every parish throughout England. This outburst of prejudice and folly gave the Queen an opportunity she had long desired. Lord Godolphin was dismissed from office; and, though the Duke of Marlborough was permitted to retain the command of the army for a short time longer, he was subjected to so many mortifications, that nothing but a strong sense of public duty prevented him from tendering his resignation.

The Duchess retired from Court to her residence at Holywell House, near St. Albans, where after some time she was joined by the Duke, whom his enemies had deprived of all his appointments. He had long sighed for domestic peace and tranquil retirement; but such blessings he was never fated to enjoy. The Duchess, baffled, mortified, and disappointed, gave full scope to her angry passions; she quarrelled with her husband, her children, and her friends; in the most

innocent action she discovered something amiss; in the most indifferent phrase she detected premeditated insult. The persecutions of the Court still further soured her temper: to escape from them, the Duke resolved to go abroad; and the honours with which he was everywhere received on the Continent consoled him for the neglect with which he had been treated at home.

On the accession of George I., Marlborough was restored to the command of the army, but was not admitted to any share of political power. He died in June, 1720, leaving to his wife the greater part of his enormous wealth. The Duchess, though frequently solicited, refused to marry again. But she lived on the worst of terms with her children and grand-children; their quarrels, indeed, occupy a very disproportionate share of the scandalous chronicles of the time. It will be sufficient to give one specimen of these family dissensions: The Duchess having quarrelled with her granddaughter, Lady Anne Egerton, caused the young lady's portrait to be blackened over, and then wrote on the frame, "She is blacker within."

The Duchess had formed a project for uniting her favourite granddaughter, Lady Diana Spencer, to Frederick, Prince of Wales, which was disconcerted by the interference of Sir Robert Walpole, to whom she ever after evinced the most inveterate hatred. Her imperious temper continued unchanged to the last hour of her life. It was said that fate itself was compelled to yield to her behests. Once, when very ill, her physicians said that she must be blistered, or she would die, upon which she called out, "I won't be blis-

tered,—and I won't die!" and on that occasion she kept her word. Her death finally took place at Marlborough House, October 18, 1744, in the eighty-eighth year of her age. She left enormous wealth: thirty thousand a year to her grandson, Charles, Duke of Marlborough, and as much to his brother; and, among her miscellaneous bequests were ten thousand pounds to Mr. Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, and double that sum to the Earl of Chesterfield, for the zeal with which they had opposed Sir Robert Walpole. It is a pity that the Duchess should be remembered by her eccentricities rather than her abilities. To her influence no small share of the early glories of Queen Anne's reign must be attributed; and she may also claim the merit of having largely contributed to secure the Hanoverian succession.

MADAME DE LONGUEVILLE

(1619—1679)

HIPPOLYTE DE LAPORTE

ANNE GENEVIÉVE DE BOURBON CONDÉ, Duchesse de Longueville, daughter of Henri II. de Bourbon-Condé, first prince of the blood, and Charlotte Marguerite de Montmorency, was born the 29th of April, 1619, in the Château de Vincennes, where her father was a State prisoner. The great Condé and the Prince de Conti were her brothers. Taken to Court by her mother, she won the admiration of everybody; her beauty alone would have been sufficient to have produced this effect; but the delicacy of her mind and a peculiar grace about everything that she did made her noticed by the great world in which she was destined to live, and especially among the *habitués* of the Hôtel de Rambouillet that she delighted to frequent. At the age of nineteen she was promised to the Prince de Joinville, son of Henri de Lorraine, Duc de Guise; this young Prince dying in Italy, and the Duc de Beaufort, who once had sought the hand of Mademoiselle de Bourbon, renouncing it, she married, although she was not more than twenty-three, the Duc de Longueville, widower of the daughter of the Count de Soissons, who was forty-seven.

Madame de Longueville did not care much for her husband, who retained for his old mistress, Madame de Mont-

MADAME DE LONGUEVILLE

bazon, an attachment of which his young wife was, naturally enough, very jealous. She soon neglected the Duke. She was first loved by Maurice, Comte de Coligny, son of the Maréchal de Châtillon, who had sought her in marriage. The Comte de Coligny espoused her anger against Madame de Montbazon, fought a duel with the Duc de Guise, and died of the wounds he received.

All the *Mémoires* of the time speak of the trip the Duchess made to Münster in 1646, where her husband filled the post of plenipotentiary. This trip, which afforded a thousand different pleasures to this Princess, and which even had, so to speak, the brilliancy of a triumph, had been instigated, so they say, by the Prince de Condé, displeased at seeing his sister return the passion entertained for her by the Prince de Marsillac, afterwards Duc de la Rochefoucauld. The honours that were bestowed upon her and the magnificence with which she was treated, prove not only the regard that was felt for her husband, but also the esteem with which her qualities, enhanced by an unusual charm of manner and expression, were regarded.

Scarcely had the Treaty of Münster lifted the plague of foreign wars from France before internal dissensions began to trouble the Kingdom. The hatred felt by Parliament for Cardinal Mazarin gave birth to the Fronde, of which the Duchesse de Longueville soon became the heroine. She was to this party what the Duchesse de Montpensier had been to the League. However, she did not attach so much importance to the cause that she supported. Indifferent in character, she was not much attracted to activity and intrigue.

M. Cousin has shown that before her relations with the Duc de Rochefoucauld, Madame de Longueville was a stranger to politics; she was only occupied with wit and love-making, letting herself be led in everything else by her father and brother. But when once La Rochefoucauld reigned over her heart, she gave herself up entirely to him and was only his instrument; he inspired her with ambition; she made it a point of honour, and doubtless a secret happiness, to share his destiny; she sacrificed all her own interests for him, even her family interests, and the greatest sentiment of her life,—her tenderness for her brother Condé.

She shared in the general doubt after the Day of the Barricades when Anne of Austria took the King, her son, to St. Germain, on the 5th of January, 1649. The greatest confusion reigned over Paris at this moment. Perhaps the Duchesse de Longueville had imbibed in the political meetings at Münster the taste for politics and negotiations; once engaged in the Fronde, she boldly announced her intention of remedying the general disorder; but above all she desired to employ means that would bring fame; and it is difficult to deny that ambition, although not the acknowledged goal, and the wish to exploit her mentality played a great part in her determination to join the party opposed to Mazarin. She made her husband enter with her and put herself at the head of that party with the Coadjutor of Paris, afterwards Cardinal de Retz, and the Prince de Conti, her second brother. As for the eldest, the Prince de Condé, he followed the King and his mother; this estranged Madame de Longueville. To assure herself still further of the confidence of Parliament

and to gain that of the populace of Paris, while the Royal troops besieged it (1649), she allowed herself to be conducted by the Coadjutor to the town hall, with the Duchesse de Bouillon. Each carried in her arms a child as beautiful as its mother. Here the Princess established her residence; she even bore a son here on the 29th of January; and the mayor, with his aldermen, carried him to the baptismal font, where he was named *Charles Paris*. Councils were assembled in the Duchess's chamber, and the meetings of Parliament were discussed there, as well as the movements of the army. The young officers received their rewards here; and laid the trophies of victory at the feet of the heroines of the party. During the three months that the blockade of the capital lasted, Madame de Longueville had the greatest influence over all the decisions against the Court and its interests. The articles of peace of March 11, 1649, were also drawn up in her apartment. The Duchess repaired to the Queen; but neither that Princess nor the Cardinal were disposed to pardon her, and the coldness they showed her only increased her aversion toward the favourite minister,—an aversion that she finally communicated to the Prince de Condé. Every one knows that the affection the latter entertained for his sister, with whom he wished to be reconciled, was extreme,—in fact, it even gave rise to odious reports. The Prince de Conti also loved Madame de Longueville with a kind of passion. The Court intrigues and the spirit of vengeance that animated Mazarin induced the Queen to have these Princes, as well as the Duc de Longueville, arrested. This happened on the 18th of January, 1650, at

the Palais-Royal, to which these three personages had been beguiled under different pretexts. The Duchess had also been summoned; but informed in time and seconded by her friend, the Princess Palatine, she left Paris and hastily took the road to Normandy. Her husband, to whom she held more through duty and interest than affection, being governor of that province, she hoped to bring about a revolt, or, at least, obtain some officers who would command forces for the relief of the prisoners; but the Cardinal's influence was paramount and Madame de Longueville was not received as she had expected to be. She greatly feared falling into the hands of her pursuers sent out by Mazarin at the same time that he sent the Queen-mother to Rouen with the King to place that young Prince at the head of several troops, and, by that means, to intimidate the rest of Normandy. The effect foreseen by the Minister took place immediately. The Duchess, seeing all her hopes shattered, betook herself to a little port, where she embarked notwithstanding the very bad weather. She was shipwrecked and expected to be drowned. Obliged to wander under several disguises, she displayed much courage and character. Having won over the captain of an English vessel at Havre, she made him take her to Rotterdam. The Prince of Orange arrived there with his family to see her and persuade her to settle herself at The Hague; but she preferred to go to Stenay Turenne, which she had gained for the Fronde party. As she passed through Flanders, the Archduke's minister presented his compliments to her and proposed a treaty of alliance; but she announced her resolution to do nothing without the concurrence of the

illustrious warrior whom we shall soon name. He gave, as one may well believe, a reception to Condé's sister worthy of her and of him; here they drew up a treaty in which it was stipulated that the two armies should unite and that the war should be undertaken with the aid and support of the King of Spain for the deliverance of the French princes. This plan was regretfully adopted by Turenne, whom the King was about to confer with his new dignity as marshal of France. Moreover, it has been shown that this great man was not as well treated by the Duchess when he spoke of love as when they discussed war or party interests. It was also at Stenay that a manifesto, which she had printed in Brussels, was circulated. This was directed against the Court, which at the instigation of Mazarin, had, by means of a declaration of the King, dated May 7, 1650, signified that this Princess and her consorts would be regarded as guilty of *lèse-majesté,* if, at the end of a month, they did not return to their duty. In her manifesto, the Duchesse de Longueville accused Cardinal Mazarin of having sworn the ruin of the Condé family and of preventing a general peace from being concluded. At Stenay, corresponding with the coalesed Princes from outside, she obtained soldiers and money. La Rochefoucauld, whose enterprises were never independent of the plans of his friend (they were still intimately connected at this period), sent her from his government at Poitou some good advice for her conduct. Finally, with the aid of those who supported her cause, she triumphed over the hatred that the Cardinal had avowed for her and her brothers, and the Court, yielding to the entreaties of all the French nobility and Parliament, restored

liberty to the Princes, after three months of detention, February 11, 1651. While the latter and the Duc de Longueville with them on their return to Paris received homage usually bestowed upon conquerors only and *fêtes* were given to them, the Duchess continued her negotiations at Stenay to end the war; she did not leave that village until the King sent Fouquet de Marsilly there, with the order to watch the meetings. The greatest honours were bestowed upon the Princess on her way home, and this time she was favourably welcomed by the King and the Queen-mother. Soon the Court and the city rushed to her house. First of all, she busied herself in Paris, as she had promised the Spaniards, to bring about the conclusion of a general peace. For this cause she opened her house to foreign ministers and treated with them without any participation of the Court of France, which, naturally enough, was hurt.

Fresh dissensions breaking out between the Queen and the house of Condé, the Duchess left for Bourges, the headquarters of the government of M. le Prince, who had retired thither. A sea of troubles existed at Bordeaux, where the Princesse de Conti was living; the Duchess repaired to her side. La Rochefoucauld, not content with having abandoned the Duchesse de Longueville, had tried to make her lose the confidence of M. le Prince. Then, through spite, or because she was beginning to be disgusted with worldly affairs, she got permission to join her aunt, the widow of the Duc de Montmorency, decapitated at Toulouse. This illustrious lady had become Superior of the Convent of the Visitation at Moulins. The Duchesse de Montmorency was the model

of all the virtues, and by her side her niece regained those religious sentiments that had filled her youthful mind; but the Duc de Longueville, who had negotiated successfully for his wife, came at the end of ten months to take her back to his government in Normandy, where she was not slow in conquering all hearts and meriting the benedictions of the poor for her charity.

Gradually the animadversion of the persons most opposed to Madame de Longueville was calmed; and the Queen-mother herself, seeing that she ceased to mingle in affairs that would compromise the public peace, ended in being more gracious to her.

However, Condé was now engaged in a new war, which lasted until 1659, the period of the peace of the Pyrenees and Louis XIV.'s marriage. When Don Louis de Haro represented the interests of the prince of the blood, Mazarin constantly brought forward the character of the sister against the brother, and Condé's weakness in following her counsels.

"As for you Spaniards," he said to the diplomatist, "you can talk about this easily. Your women only meddle for the sake of making love; but it is not the same in France, and we have three who are capable of governing or of overthrowing three great Kingdoms: the Duchesse de Longueville, the Princesse Palatine, and the Duchesse de Chevreuse."

Finally, the troubles, dangers, and evils that had succeeded one another in France for a period of twenty-five years were over. Upon the Prince de Condé's return, his sister, restored to grace, like the other rebels, returned with the Duc de Longueville to Court, which now became calm and brilliant

again. Society recovered all its amenity and charm: the happy days of literature began. Madame de Longueville, now about forty years of age, was perfectly qualified to shine with brilliancy in this Court, where she had not now to fight the Cardinal, who died in 1661; but she was disgusted with intrigues and contented herself with looking after the interests of her family. By degrees, devotion, to which she had been for some time again violently attracted, brought calm to her soul. She lived at Rouen sometimes, sometimes on her estate in Normandy, and sometimes in Paris, where she assiduously visited her friends, the Carmelites in the Rue St. Jacques. The Duc de Longueville dying in 1663, his widow practically retired from the world, without, however, relinquishing what her rank and good breeding demanded on important occasions. She spent her time in religious devotion and superintending the education of her sons. From this time forward, living more habitually in the capital, she bought the Hôtel d'Epernon, Rue St. Thomas du Louvre, which for a long time kept the name of Hôtel de Longueville; but she also had a lodging with the Carmelites. In 1672, her sister-in-law, the Princesse de Conti, left her the care and education of her children. The war with Holland put the religious virtue of this lady to the greatest test. The son born in the city-hall of Paris, and who since the death of his father had been known by the name of the Comte de St. Paul, was killed at the age of twenty-three years at the famous passage of the Rhine (June 12, 1672). The Duchesse de Longueville then devoted herself entirely to religion. She died on the 15th of April, 1679, aged fifty-nine.

CATHERINE II., EMPRESS OF RUSSIA

(1729—1796)

HERMAN MERIVALE

THE name of the Empress Catherine is more familiar to European ears as that of the sanguinary destroyer of Polish independence than of the second founder of Russian greatness. And to many readers, perhaps, it is a name which calls up even more readily associations of a simply ignominious character. European history has preserved no other record, certainly not since the days of the Cæsars, of such utter obliteration of moral sense and self-respect in habitual profligacy, as were exhibited especially in the later years of her reign. It was a state of things in which a so-called civilised and Christian palace seemed reduced for a period to the level of more than savage licence; self-indulgence of every kind was without limit or disguise, and scandal itself—that which furnishes the daily interest of ordinary courts, and the common link between that class of society which swims and that which sinks—had almost ceased to exist, because the sensibilities in which it originates were altogether blunted, and the observer had ceased to be scandalised at anything. But with the disorders of the Czarina's private life we need have no concern on the present occasion, except in so far as they affected her conduct of public affairs; and so,

in the name of common decency, we will let the curtain drop on Catherine the woman, and rise on Catherine the ruler.

Her training was one of no common severity and calculated to develop to the utmost the gifts of a mind of first-rate power, as well as tact and acuteness.

She was brought a mere child from Germany, to be delivered to a husband whom she, and those whom she inspired, may have painted in too dark colours; but who certainly seems from all we know of him to have been little above a cunning idiot in intellect, and a brute in propensities. She had to live for some years in dangerous proximity of rank and position to her predecessor, the Empress Elizabeth, whose mind, though not originally weak, was impaired by habitual self-indulgence; not an ill-natured personage, nor ill-affected towards herself, but irritable, gusty, suspicious, and only to be propitiated by watchful cajolery. Handsome, audacious, and intellectual, Catherine passed the best years of youth in a Court composed of drunken, uneducated men and frivolous women, whose range of ideas was confined to show, except when it extended to intrigue and partisanship. And the consequences to be dreaded from a single false step amidst the pitfalls through which her path lay were not merely court disfavour, or less of influence; the convent amidst the snows of Archangel, the prison vault below the level of the Neva, Siberia, the scaffold, these were in daily, hardly in distant, prospect. By the time her husband ascended the throne he and she had become mortal enemies; he had thrown her aside for others, and she had been notoriously and all but avowedly unfaithful to him. Thenceforth it became a struggle for

CATHERINE II., EMPRESS OF RUSSIA.

existence between the two. Had she not accomplished the revolution of 1762, her life or liberty would have been assuredly forfeit. Had his life been spared after his dethronement, the next turn of the wheel would have placed her again at his mercy. Whether she was actually guilty or cognisant of his murder is an unsettled problem: and those who are inclined may give her the benefit of the doubt, for it is probable that those who accomplished the design would have deemed themselves more likely to be embarrassed than protected by her participation in it. But she made it her own by adoption of its results, and by the strongest devotion to its perpetrators.

Adversity first made her a student; and then her strong imagination always dwelling on the part she might one day have to play combined with her craving for mental employment to increase her passion for books, especially such as might afford nourishment to the future ruler of men. Plutarch, Tacitus, Montaigne, Voltaire were her early favourites. And she was a reader of that class in whose powerful memory whatever they acquire becomes a fixed possession. She had gone into that purgatory of her youth a girl, with scarcely opened mind and childish tastes; she came out of it fit to correspond on equal terms with Voltaire and Diderot, and to discuss public affairs with the most experienced members of her council.

Another and even more important result of this iron discipline was the singular equanimity which characterised Catherine, not merely in special conjunctures, but throughout the whole of her long and chequered reign. The gift of a

good-natured and forgiving disposition—*Gutmüthigkeit,* the favourite German name, is that which best expresses it—had been improved by the lessons of necessity. Inured to rebuffs, slights, mortifications, she had learned to bear opposition of all kinds with a calmness strange in any one, most strange in a proud woman and absolute sovereign. Inured to win her own way to her ends through patience and tact, she carried into the council-room and senate the same long-suffering, good humour, much enduring of violence, selfishness, and tiresomeness, which had been so precious to her in the early trials of her married childhood.

The same independence and boldness of thought, and disregard of mere conventional servitudes, characterised her in lesser as in greater matters. It was very conspicuous in the etiquette of her Court. The ceremonial of that of Russia, when she was introduced to it, had been a mixture of barbarism and pompousness. That of the German sovereign houses, from which she sprang, was pedantic in the extreme. She had scarcely been a year on the throne before she had placed it on a footing which charmed all observers by its union of ease with dignity. A German envoy (Sacken) cannot disguise his astonishment at it. He writes of the habits of the residence at Czarsko Selo, in 1774: "People appear there without swords or ribands! The Empress goes into her cabinet, and comes out again, unnoticed; and it is not the custom for any of her attendants to appear as if they observed her, or to pay her the slightest obeisance as she passes." And for many years her demeanour in daily society continued to exhibit the same graceful absence of constraint.

The activity of the first years of her government seemed to partake of the supernatural. She accomplished the secularisation of the vast estates of the clergy—a work conceived by Peter the Great, and undertaken by her husband, but of which the execution was left to herself. She commenced, and made some progress with, a general code of jurisprudence for her empire. She laid the foundation of great schemes of national education. She planted her favourite German colonies in the south. And (by far the most important undertaking of all) she launched the vast project of emancipating the serfs.

It was said of her, coarsely but truly, that she would have been great, indeed, but for the excess of two qualities—the love of man and the love of glory. Then the easy successes, and singular brilliancy, of the first Turkish campaigns excited her enthusiastic spirit. The "road to Constantinople" seemed, indeed, more nearly open to her in 1770 than even to her grandson, in 1853. It was only by degrees, and after many a defeat, that the slow but obstinate energies of the Ottoman race were awakened, and the struggle became one of exhausting duration, in which Russia sustained no repulse of consequence, but could only make way, step by step, through endless expenditure of men and treasure. During great part of her reign, the Russian Empire was so denuded of both by the constant drain of Turkish, and, in a less degree, of Polish warfare, that improvements could not be even seriously endeavoured in an internal administration which had become an engine solely devoted to the purposes of raising troops and levying taxes.

Such was the price at which her brilliant conquests were achieved. Her arms were, of course, not uniformly victorious; but she was the only conqueror of modern times who never sustained a serious defeat, nor ever had to restore an acquisition. "I came to Russia a poor girl," she once said, "and Russia has dowered me richly. But I have paid her back with Azof, the Crimea, and the Ukraine."

The too visible arrest or rather decline of the well-being of her empire, toward the middle of her long career, must have taught so acute a mind a sound lesson. But by this time she had become the victim of circumstances: and more than this, the vassal of other spirits far meaner than her own. It is strange to trace the Nemesis of outraged womanhood in this last trait of her character. She, the most masculine of her sex, was subject equally with the weakest to what has been called the female necessity of being some one's slave. Nor was this slavery a mere consequence of her grosser failings. At her Court, the minion of the hour was usually one, the permanent ruler another. In fact, for the greater part of her life she was governed by two men in succession, neither of whom had the tithe of her abilities, but who mastered her imagination by their tyrannical force of character: Gregor Orlof and Potemkin. The first was not without nobleness of disposition, but eccentric, morose, pursued as it were through life by the furies of his murdered sovereign; and ultimately insane. He was the only man, perhaps, whom she truly loved.

Potemkin, on the other hand, as is well known (for few portraits have been more characteristically drawn, or by bet-

ter artists), exhibited a strange mixture of extravagance and buffoonery with a good deal of cunning, and some real sagacity. It is difficult to ascertain how far he really imposed on his doting mistress, and how far she consented to the imposture, knowing it, but not daring to betray her knowledge. The worst results, however, of the favouritism of her latter years, as regards the internal management of her empire, was not so much the direct interference for evil of the favourites themselves, as that of the number of meaner spirits, favourites' favourites, hangers-on of each minion of the time, who crept by their means into place and power. This was especially the case under the reign of Potemkin.

Death surprised her, after thirty-four years of constant successes, still planning further schemes of aggression and aggrandisement—designing to trample out both the Mussulman and the Jacobin; with Constantinople, Paris, Teheran, and Stockholm, full in view, as the objects no longer to appearance remote, of her daring ambition. But the loftier purposes of her youth, her essays at material and moral civilisation, were not, indeed, abandoned; she never lost sight of them; but adjourned, as it proved, indefinitely. "*Avant la mort de Catherine,*" says Masson, "*la plupart des monuments de son règne ressemblaient déjà à des débris; législation, colonies, éducation, institut, fabriques, bâtiments, hôpitaux, canaux, villes, forteresses, tout avait été commencé et abandonné avant d'être achevé.*" Nor could it be said, great and popular as her name had been among the Russians, that she had effected any substantial change in the national character; but she had effectually aroused the national spirit.

She had inspired them with that thorough martial confidence in the valour of their armies and the star of their destiny, which has since carried them, either triumphant or at least unbroken, through so many a struggle. Except in this particular, the generation which saw her buried, boyars and serfs alike, was probably much the same, in habits, tendencies, and education, with that which had beheld her mount the throne. Her hand was not equal to the work of stripping any large portion of the aged rind from the rich fruit within. Her influence on her era was very great; but it was indirect, and more felt perhaps by the world at large than by Russia in particular. Her achievements were those of a clear, decisive intellect and generous spirit, unseduced by the common shows of things, and unterrified by vulgar dangers, which could establish the theory of monarchy on the naked utilitarian basis of the "greatest good of the greatest number"; which could carry to the throne, and practise on the throne, but with prudence, the maxims of a few mere thinkers, despicable in the eyes of ordinary politicians, and could astonish the latter by proving that neither State nor Church fell down in consequence, but seemed to attain additional security. She dared follow to its results that fearless optimism, which habitually assumed the best respecting men and their motives, and deemed harsh punishment and violent coercion simply evils in themselves, unadapted to the real exigencies of human nature, imperfect instruments of which the use required apology. These were the merits which gave her an authority not limited by mere Russian geography in her own day, and which, notwithstanding all that is on record against her—

the sins of her private life, the fraud and violence under which Poland perished, the sacrifice of countless multitudes to the lust of conquest—entitle her to her place in history amongst that band of kindred intellects, on the throne and in the study, who in the Eighteenth Century made ready for us of the present day the world in which we dwell.

MADAME RÉCAMIER

(1777—1849)

NOEL WILLIAMS

HER angelic face can bear no other name; one look suffices to bind your heart to her forever." Such was the dictum pronounced by no less a person than Lamartine on Madame Récamier, without a doubt the most remarkable figure in Parisian society during the first four decades of the Nineteenth Century, the idol of Prince Augustus of Prussia; of Matthieu de Montmorency, of Benjamin Constant, and of René Chateaubriand; the bosom friend of Madame de Staël; the confidante of Murat, Bernadotte, and Moreau; about whose charms Lucien Bonaparte raved, and to whom Wellington made love in his bad French. Before the throne of this uncrowned queen of France kings and princes, statesmen and orators, authors and artists, warriors and diplomatists, bowed the knee, and she received their homage with that easy grace and gentle dignity which commanded at once their respect and the admiration.

Jeanne Françoise Julie Adélaïde Bernard—to write it in full, although she used only the third of her four Christian names—was born at Lyons on the 4th of December, 1777.

MADAME RÉCAMIER.

Her father, Jean Bernard, was a notary of that city, but beyond the fact that he was extremely good-looking, he does not appear to have been in any way distinguished. Her mother (whose maiden name was Manton), from whom Julie inherited that bewitching loveliness and charm of manner which was to secure for her a European reputation, was a singularly beautiful and accomplished woman with an extraordinary aptitude for business, which enabled her to amass by successful speculation a nice little fortune, and, what according to Disraeli is far harder of accomplishment, to keep it.

In 1784, Jean Bernard was appointed a collector of customs in Paris, where he and his wife took up their residence, and their little daughter was placed in the convent of La Déserte at Lyons. When about ten years of age she joined her parents in Paris, where they were living in very good style, having a box at the Théâtre Français, and giving supper-parties twice a week. Even at that early age she seems to have been remarkable for her beauty and grace, and became the pet of La Harpe and other literary men who frequented the Bernards' house; and to this fact may be attributed her taste for literary society, to which she is in no small degree indebted for her lasting celebrity. Her mother, who seems to have attached an extraordinary importance to the power of personal attraction, compelled the poor child to spend many weary hours at her toilet-table, and allowed no opportunity to slip of exhibiting her little daughter's budding charms to the admiring eyes of the Parisians. Although Madame Bernard paid so much attention to her child's personal appearance, she

by no means neglected her education, and, indeed, supervised her education with the greatest care. Juliette had the advantage of studying under the best masters, and became an excellent musician and graceful dancer.

At the age of fifteen Juliette received an offer of marriage. Her suitor was a wealthy Paris banker named Jacques Récamier, a handsome, pleasure-loving man of forty-three, generous to a fault, and, at the same time, oddly enough, utterly without feeling. The wedding took place in April, 1793; scarcely a time, one would have supposed, for marrying or giving in marriage. The Reign of Terror was at its height; all society was broken up and scattered to the four winds of heaven, and all family ties annihilated.

The first four years of Juliette's married life were, therefore, of necessity spent in comparative seclusion, during which her beauty fully developed, and she passed from childhood into all the splendour of youth. The following description from the pen of Madame Lenormant, of her appearance at this time, does not seem, even after making all due allowance for the fact that the writer was both her niece and most enthusiastic admirer, to be in any way an exaggerated one:

"A figure flexible and elegant; a well-poised head; throat and shoulders of admirable form and proportions; beautiful arms, though somewhat small; a little, rosy mouth; black hair that curled naturally; a delicate and regular nose, but *bien-français;* an incomparable brilliancy of complexion; a frank, arch face, rendered irresistibly lovely from its expression of goodness; a carriage slightly indicative of both indo-

lence and pride, so that to her might be applied Saint-Simon's compliment to the Duchess of Burgundy—

"'Her step was like that of a goddess on clouds.'"

Such was Madame Récamier at eighteen.

After the Terror was over, in the day of order and reconstruction, Madame Récamier soon became a notable figure in the somewhat mixed society which had taken the place of the old aristocracy, and was throwing itself with a zest sharpened by the privations of terror, war, and famine into a vortex of pleasure. Her presence at any of its gatherings was looked upon as an event of no small importance, and wherever she went her loveliness called forth murmurs of curiosity and admiration. Among the earliest to pay tribute to her charms were Napoleon Bonaparte himself and his brother Lucien.

The friendship of Lucien Bonaparte was a privilege with which Madame Récamier could very well have dispensed. He began by bombarding her with a series of *billets-doux* couched in the most grandiloquent language, assuming the name of Romeo because hers was Juliette. He must have felt extremely foolish when the object of his devotion handed him back his first love-letter in the presence of a number of mutual friends, praising the talents of the writer, but advising him not to waste in "works of imagination," the time which he might more profitably devote to politics. However, he was not the man to be discouraged by the want of success which had attended his romantic epistles, and so abandoning his *nom-de-guerre*, he wrote Madame Récamier letters the purport of which she could not pretend to misunderstand.

These she showed to her husband and proposed to forbid Lucien the house. But Récamier represented to her that to quarrel openly with the brother of General Bonaparte would undoubtedly compromise him, and probably jeopardise his business, and advised her not to repulse Romeo too harshly.

Jacques Récamier's position as a wealthy banker gave him in those days a position which he could not have occupied under the ancient monarchy, and his wife's renown as a beauty, and the fact that her *salon* was regarded as a sort of neutral ground where all parties might meet, added to the popularity of the house, and their hotel in the Chaussée d'Antin, then the Rue du Mont Blanc, in the furnishing of which Berthaut, the architect, had been allowed *carte-blanche,* became the *rendez-vous* for all that was most distinguished in political, artistic, and literary circles. Thither came Eugène Beauharnais and Fouché, Adrien and Matthieu de Montmorency, Murat, Bernadotte, Masséna and Moreau, Camille Jourdan and Narbonne, La Harpe, Legouvé and Emmanuel Dupattey, and last, but by no means least, Madame de Staël. A business transaction, the purchase of this very house in the Rue du Mont Blanc, which had formerly belonged to Necker, Madame de Staël's father, was the means of bringing these two celebrated women together.

The first eight years of the Nineteenth Century may be regarded as the period of Madame Récamier's reign as Queen of Parisian society. Her husband's banking-house had now become one of the wealthiest in France, and she had only to express a wish to see it immediately gratified, so that at their

country-seat at Clichy, and at their house in the Rue du Mont Blanc, she was enabled to entertain in regal style all the most distinguished people in Paris. Juliette was now in the zenith of her beauty and popularity.

Unfortunately for Madame Récamier there was one person who regarded the popularity of her receptions with no friendly eye. This was Bonaparte, who had established himself at the Tuileries, where he had lived in a splendour which bade fair to rival that of the ancient *régime,* while his family affected something of the dignity of royalty. He had wished to attach the new beauty to his Court, but Madame Récamier, who valued her independence, had refused, and as Bonaparte could not bear the idea of a society which did not derive all its *éclat* from him, he actually seems in time to have come to regard her with the hatred of a rival. Moreover, he was fully alive to the fact that the *salons* of Paris were distinctly hostile to his government, and that at receptions like those of Madame Récamier and Madame de Staël, his ambitious schemes were wont to be discussed and treated with scant respect. He could not, of course, prevent this except by resorting to extreme measures, and these he finally took. In 1803, Madame de Staël, of whose intellectual powers he seems to have been as jealous as Louis XIV. was of those of Madame de Sévigné, was banished from Paris, and forbidden to approach within forty leagues of the capital; and five years later, after the publication of her book *De L'Allemagne*, she was expelled from France altogether.

In his dealings with the first beauty in France, Napoleon showed himself as harsh and tyrannical as he had been to the

first wit. He made another attempt to undermine Madame Récamier's social influence, and to this end commissioned the astute Fouché to offer her the post of a *dame du palais,* the acceptance of which would, of course, have necessitated the closing of her *salon,* but the honour was respectfully yet firmly declined. Madame Récamier was soon to learn what this refusal should cost her. In 1806, her husband's banking-house became involved in a series of misfortunes, brought about by the financial panic in Spain. A comparatively small sum—a million francs (£40,000)—would have enabled him to tide over his difficulties, but when he applied to the Bank of France for a loan to this amount, notwithstanding the fact that he had ample security to offer, and the bank had lately shown itself desirous of doing everything in its power to re-establish public credit, his application was instantly and harshly refused. The consequence was that Récamier's bank was compelled to close its doors, and Juliette and her husband found themselves suddenly reduced from affluence to comparative poverty. There can be little doubt that Bonaparte, who manipulated banks and bourses as readily as he did armies and navies, was responsible for this otherwise unaccountable action on the part of the authorities of the Bank of France.

Madame Récamier, aware that she herself was indirectly the cause of her husband's failure, bore this reversal of fortune without a murmur. The house in the Rue du Mont Blanc and the *château* at Clichy were immediately put up for sale, and while her husband voluntarily resigned all his personal possessions to his creditors, she disposed of her jewellery

to the very last trinket. The sympathy felt for her was universal ("It could not have been greater if she had been the widow of a marshal of France slain on the field of battle," Bonaparte angrily remarked), and she became, if possible, an even greater object of admiration than she had been in the days of her prosperity. Unfortunately money made all the difference, and without money, Madame Récamier, although she might retain her friends, could no longer continue to lead society.

It is perhaps a little difficult to understand at first in what lay the peculiar charm of Madame Récamier. She was beautiful, we know, but many other women have been as beautiful, and yet have not succeeded in arousing anything which can be compared to the admiration and devotion which Madame Récamier commanded throughout her career. The secret is probably to be found in her charm of manner, her perfect ease and grace in conversation, and her extraordinary tact, which enabled her to fill her *salon* with people of every shade and variety of opinion, and every class and rank in society, and yet so to contrive that every one there, whether Catholic or Agnostic, whether Bonapartist or Legitimist, whether prince of the blood, or struggling *littérateur*, should be made to feel perfectly at his ease. It is, indeed, to her wonderful tact, and to her still more wonderful power of sympathising with the opinions and feelings of others, quite as much as to her beauty of face and form, that Juliette Récamier is indebted for her place among the most celebrated women of the Nineteenth Century.

ELIZABETH CROMWELL CLAYPOLE

(1629—1658)

MARK NOBLE

ELIZABETH the second and favourite daughter of the protector, Oliver, was christened July 2, 1629, at St. John's church, in Huntingdon; she was married, before her father's elevation, to John Claypole, Esq., afterwards master of horse to the Protectors, Oliver and Richard.

This lady had the elevation of mind and dignity of deportment of one born of a royal stem, with all the affability and goodness of the most humble; such a character as this deserved, and has, I believe, escaped even the ridicule so liberally thrown upon all of every party, during this unhappy war, one writer only excepted.*

Mr. Thyer has explained the meaning of this in a note: "In the rustic ceremony of a Whitesun-ale, besides a mock

* Butler, in his posthumous works, has ridiculed Mrs. Claypole, with the rest of the Cromwell family in these lines:

"Yet old Queen Madge,
Though things do not fadge,
Will serve to be Queen of the May-pole;
Two princes of Wales,
For Whitsun-ales,
And her Grace Maid Marian Claypole."

ELIZABETH CROMWELL CLAYPOLE.

king, queen, etc., there is always a maid-marion, which is, a young woman, or a boy dressed in woman's cloaths, whose business it is to dance the moresco, or morice dance." This must have been written in the lifetime of Oliver, as Mrs. Claypole is mentioned in it.

Happiness is not sometimes the lot of the best; it pleased Providence to afflict her with the most severe disorder, with the loss of a dear child; besides which, the dislike she had to her father's conduct, and her sincere wishes to see the lawful heir to the Crown restored to his rights, all conspired to distress a mind the most feeling, and then oppressed with the most acute pains: unable to struggle against so many trials, she gave way to fate, August 6, 1658.

What is also generally allowed to have at least hastened her end was the death of Doctor Hewitt, who, with Sir Henry Slingsby, lost his head upon the scaffold, for endeavouring to effect a revolution in favour of the exiled prince.*

* Dr. Hewitt was tried May 25, 1658, by the high court of justice, which, as he denied its jurisdiction, as an unlawful court and established by a more unlawful power, condemned him to death. Whitlock says, the doctor carried himself impudently; this the author of the history of England during the reigns of the Stuarts, in pretending to copy, says, this unfortunate divine "carried himself imprudently"; but is this impartiality and candour? Probably Whitlock alludes to the doctor's boldly saying, that he would plead if either of the judges, or the learned counsel at law, would give it under their hands, that the high court of justice was a lawful judicatory. It is certain, that the doctor's denying the jurisdiction by which he was tried, lost him his life; as the Protector thought it was striking at the very life of his government; at least, with his obstinate silence of the part he had acted in the plot, which, as the Protector well knew, he insisted upon the doctor's confessing it; had he done this, and been silent about the jurisdiction of the

The former of these unfortunate gentlemen was particularly beloved by Mrs. Claypole, and whose house she frequented to hear divine worship, according to the Church of England; she therefore importuned his pardon with the greatest earnestness, and requested it upon her knees; but her father (who seldom denied her any request) utterly refused her this, which is supposed to have given her spirits a prodigious shock.*

It is allowed by our historians, that in the repeated conferences she had with Oliver just before her death, she painted the guilt of his ambition in the most dreadful colours; which, says Lord Clarendon, exceedingly perplexed him; and observes, that he took much pains to prevent any of his attendants hearing, yet many expressions escaped her which were heard by those near her, respecting cruelty and blood; and she was particular in mentioning the death, say they, of her pious pastor; the near approach of her dissolution giving her, she supposed, liberty to say what formerly she thought, yet durst not then express.

"Such a remonstrance," says Mr. Grainger, "from a beloved child, in so affecting a situation, must have sunk deep

court, he would have been pardoned, as Oliver declared to Doctor Manton. It is an argument of the unfortunate divine's goodness, that those excellent ladies, Mrs. Claypole and Lady Falconberg, were strenuous for his pardon, and that Prynne pleaded as his counsel.

* It may reasonably be supposed that Doctor Hewitt's death was sensibly felt by Mrs. Claypole; but it appears that she rejoiced in the discovery of that plot for which he died so that, probably, her excess of grief is somewhat heightened, occasioned by her dying soon after.

into his mind; it was strongly suspected that his conscience took the alarm, and was never afterwards at rest from that moment;" and to this both Lord Clarendon and Ludlow agree; the former says, that though he (Cromwell) did not show any remorse, it is very certain, that "either what she said, or her death, affected him wonderfully"; and the latter, that after Mrs. Claypole's death, "it was observed, that Cromwell grew melancholy."

This amiable lady died at Hampton Court, amidst the prayers of all for her recovery, and her loss was lamented by the whole court, but particularly by her husband and father.

No respect whatever was omitted that could be paid to her memory; the Protector ordered the body to be removed from the palace in which she died, to the painted chamber in Westminster, where it lay in state some time, and from thence was conveyed, in the night of the 10th of August, in great funeral pomp, to the dormitory of the English Kings, where it was deposited in a vault made purposely to receive it: Mrs. Wilkes, the deceased's aunt, walked as chief mourner.

This excellent lady was, it is said, a warm partisan for King Charles I. as well as for King Charles II. It is a well-known fact that she constantly used all her influence in behalf of any who fell into misfortunes on account of their loyalty; indeed, all that were in distress partook of her bounty, which, with her munificence, rendered the very large allowance the Protector settled upon her inadequate.

The faithful Whitlock gives her this amiable character, and he must have known her well: "She was a lady of excellent parts, dear to her parents, and civil to all persons,

and courteous and friendly to all gentlemen of her acquaintance; her death did much grieve her father." *

There is a medal in silver of the Lady Elizabeth, which on one side exhibits her bust, but without any inscription; it shows the profile of a very handsome woman, with a commanding, yet obliging countenance, such as bespeaks a great

* It may not be improper here to give what Carrington has said of Mrs. Claypole. After speaking of the joy the conquest of Dunkirk occasioned, he subjoins, "that the laurels faded, and the joys abated by the interposing of the cypress-tree, which death planted upon the tomb of the illustrious and most generous Lady Claypole, second daughter to his late highness, who departed this life to a more glorious and eternal one, on the sixth day of August, this present year: a fatal prognostication of a more sensible ensuing loss. For even as branches of trees, being cut and lopped in an ill-season, do first draw away the sap from the tree, and afterwards cause the body thereof to draw up and die; in like manner, during the declining age of his late highness, an ill season in which men usually do, as it were, reap all their consolation from the youth and vigour of their children, wherein they seem to go to ruin by degrees as they draw near to their death, it unfortunately fell out, that this most illustrious daughter, the true representative and lively image of her father, the joy of his heart, the delight of his eyes, and the dispenser of his clemency and benignity, died in the flower of her age, which struck more to his heart than all the heavy burden of his affairs, which were only as a pleasure and pastime to his great soul. So great a power hath nature over the dispositions of generous men, when the tie of blood is seconded by love and virtue. This generous and noble Lady Elizabeth, therefore, departed this world, in despite of all the skill of physicians, the prayers of those afflicted persons whom she had relieved, and the vows of all kinds of artists whom she cherished; but she died an amazonian-like death, despising the pomps of the earth, and without any grief, save to leave an afflicted father, perplexed at her so sudden being taken away; she died with those good lessons in her mouth, which she had practised whilst she lived. And if there be any comfort left us in her death, it is in the hope we have that her

and affable person; it is highly relieved, and in a fine taste; the medal is become very scarce, and has for that reason been lately restored. Mr. Theobald, in 1728, showed the Society of Antiquaries a medal in gold of hers, modelled by Abraham and finished by Thomas Simons, whose initials were over it.*

good example will raise up the like inclination in the remainder of her sisters, whom heaven hath yet left us. I shall not at all speak of her funeral, for if I might have been credited, all the Muses and their god Apollo should have made her an epicedium, and should have appeared in mourning, which should have reached from the top of their Mount Parnassus to the bottom of the valley thereof." He adds that, "if this great personage's death received not the funeral rites which all great wits were bound to pay it, the martial men did evidence that the neglect did not lie at their doors, in revenge for the loss of their English Pallas, and of their Jupiter's daughter." This is, indeed, hyperbolical, but the truth is easily traced in the panegyric.

*Snelling's engravings of medals, and Virtue's engravings of the works of Simons.

ISABELLA D'ESTE

(1474—1539)

JULIA CARTWRIGHT

THE history of these two princesses (Isabella and Beatrice d'Este) was closely interwoven during the early years of their wedded life, and Isabella's visits to Milan, and her correspondence with Lodovico Sforza and his young wife naturally filled a large share of her time and thoughts. But these six brilliant years which made up the whole of Beatrice's married life formed only a brief episode in Isabella's long and eventful career. During the next forty years she played an important part in the history of her times, and made the little Court of Mantua famous in the eyes of the whole civilised world. Her close relationship with the reigning families of Milan and Naples, of Ferrara and Urbino, and constant intercourse with Popes and monarchs made her position one of peculiar importance, while the wisdom and sagacity which she showed in political affairs commanded universal respect. Both during the lifetime of her husband and son she was repeatedly called upon to administer the government of the state, and showed a coolness and dexterity in the conduct of the most difficult negotiations that would have excited the admiration of Machiavelli himself. By her skilful diplomacy this able woman saved the little state of

ISABELLA D'ESTE.

Mantua from falling a prey to the ambitious designs of Cæsar Borgia, or the vengeance of two powerful French monarchs, Louis XII. and Francis I. At the same time she helped her brother, Duke Alfonso of Ferrara, to resist the furious assaults of Julius II. and the tortuous policy of Leo X., and to preserve his duchy in the face of the most prolonged and determined opposition. Isabella lived to see the fulfilment of her fondest wish, when, in 1531, the newly-crowned Emperor, Charles V., visited Mantua and raised her eldest son to the rank of a Duke, while Pope Clement VII. bestowed a Cardinal's hat on her second son, Ercole.

But it is above all as a patron of art and letters that Isabella d'Este will be remembered. In this respect she deserves a place with the most enlightened princes of the Renaissance, with Lorenzo de' Medici and Ludovico Sforza. A true child of her age, Isabella combined a passionate love of beauty and the most profound reverence for antiquity with the finest critical taste. Her studios and villas were adorned with the best paintings and statues by the first masters of the day, and with the rarest antiques from the Eternal City and the Isles of Greece. Her book-shelves contained the daintiest editions of classical works printed at the Aldine Press, and the newest poems and romances by living writers. Viols and organs of exquisite shape and tone, lutes of inlaid ivory and ebony, the richest brocades and rarest gems, the finest gold and silver-work, the choicest majolica and the most delicately tinted Murano glass found a place in her *camerini*. But everything that she possessed must be of the best, and she was satisfied with nothing short of perfection. Even Man-

tegna and Perugino sometimes failed to please her, and Aldo's books were returned to be more carefully revised and printed. To attain these objects Isabella spared neither time nor trouble. She wrote endless letters, and gave the artists in her employment the most elaborate and minute instructions. Braghirolli counted as many as forty letters on the subject of a single picture painted by Giovanni Bellini, and no less than fifty-three on a painting entrusted to Perugino.

If Isabella was a fastidious and at times a severe critic, she was also a generous and kindly patron, prompt to recognise true merit and stimulate creative effort, and ever ready to befriend struggling artists. And poets and painters alike gave her freely of their best. Castiglione and Niccolo da Correggio, Bembo and Bibbiena, were among her constant correspondents. Aldo Manuzio printed Virgils and Petrarchs for her use, Lorenzo da Pavia made her musical instruments of unrivalled beauty and sweetness. The works of Mantegna and Costa, of Giovanni Bellini and Michelangelo, of Perugino and Correggio, adorned her rooms. Giovanni Santi, Andrea Mantegna, Francesco Francia, and Lorenzo Costa all in turn painted portraits of her, which have, alas! perished. But her beautiful features still live in Leonardo's perfect drawing, in Cristoforo's medals, and in Titian's great picture in Vienna. Nor were poets and prose-writers remiss in paying her their homage. Paolo Giovio addressed her as the rarest of women; Bembo and Trissino celebrated her charms and virtues in their sonnets and *canzoni*. Castiglione gave her a high place in his courtly record, Ariosto paid her a magnificent tribute in his *Orlando,* while endless were the

songs and lays which minor bards offered at the shrine of this peerless Marchesa, whom they justly called the foremost lady in the world—"*la prima donna del mondo*"—"Isabella d'Este," writes Jacopo Caviceo, "at the sound of whose name all the Muses rise and do reverence."

In her aims and aspirations, Isabella was a typical child of the Renaissance, and her thoughts and actions faithfully reflected the best traditions of the age. Her own conduct was blameless. As a wife and mother, as a daughter and sister, she was beyond reproach. But her judgments conformed to the standard of her own times, and her diplomacy followed the principles of Machiavelli and of Marino Sanuto. She had a strong sense of family affections, and would have risked her life for the sake of advancing the interests of her husband and children or brothers, but she did not hesitate to ask Cæsar Borgia for the statues of which he had robbed her brother-in-law, and danced merrily at the ball given by Louis XII., while her old friend and kinsman, Duke Ludovico, languished in the dungeons of Loches. Like others of her age she knew no regrets and felt no remorse, but lived wholly in the present, throwing herself with all the might of her strong vitality into the business or enjoyment of the hour, forgetful of the past and careless of the future.

Fortunate in the time of her birth and in the circumstances of her life, Isabella was above all fortunate in this, that she saw the finest works of the Renaissance in the prime of their beauty. She knew Venice and Milan in their most triumphant hour, when the glowing hues of Titian and Giorgione's frescoes, of Leonardo and Gian Bellini's paintings were fresh

upon the walls. She visited the famous palace of Urbino in the days of the good old Duke Guidobaldo, when young Raphael was painting his first pictures, and Bembo and Castiglione sat at the feet of the gentle Duchess Elisabetta. She came to Florence when Leonardo and Michelangelo were working side by side at their cartoons in the Council Hall, and she was the guest of Leo X., and saw the wonders of the Sistina and of Raphael's Stanze, before the fair halls of the Vatican had been defaced by barbarian invaders.

Many and sad were the changes that she witnessed in the course of her long life. She saw the first "invasion of the stranger, and all Italy in flame and fire," as her own Ferrara poet sang in words of passionate lament. She saw Naples torn from the house of Aragon, the fair Milanese, where the Moro and Beatrice had reigned in their pride, lost in a single day. She saw Urbino conquered twice over and her own kith and kin driven into exile, first by the treacherous Borgia, then by a Medici Pope, who was bound to the reigning house by the closest ties of friendship and gratitude. And in 1527 she found herself an unwilling witness of the nameless horrors that attended the siege and sack of Rome. Three years later she was present at the Emperor Charles V.'s coronation at Bologna, and took an active part in the splendid ceremonies that marked the loss of Italian independence and the close of this great period. But to the last Isabella retained the same delight in beauty, the same keen sense of enjoyment. She advanced in years without ever growing old, and in the last months of her life, one of the foremost scholars of the age, Cardinal Bembo, pronounced her to be the wisest and most

fortunate of woman. The treasures of art and learning which she had collected were sold by her descendants to foreign princes, or destroyed when the Germans sacked Mantua, ninety years after her death, and the ruin of her favourite palaces and villas was completed by the French invaders of 1797, who did not even spare the tomb which held her ashes. But Isabella herself will be long remembered as the fairest and most perfect flower of womanhood which blossomed under the sunny skies of Virgil's land, in the immortal days of the Italian Renaissance.

LA DUCHESSE DE BERRI

(1798—1870)

A. E. CHALLICE

LOUIS XVIII. was again brought to Paris after the Battle of Waterloo, but he became more than ever sensible that his own health was failing fast, and that from his much-loved and devoted niece, the Duchesse Angoulême, who had then been married sixteen years, he could scarcely hope for a continuation of his race. And, therefore, it came to pass that a marriage was immediately projected between the Duc de Berri, the younger and more popular brother of the Duc d'Angoulême, with the young Neapolitan Princess Marie Caroline (granddaughter of King Ferdinand), who was already connected by numerous ties of blood with both France and Austria.

It was at Fontainebleau that the two Duchesses d'Angoulême and de Berri met. The latter had never, as yet, beheld her husband, to whom she was already wedded by proxy. He was many years older than she was, and he had written to her on her way from Naples through the southern provinces of France—a way which, to her, was a triumphal progress,—"Press my hand when you see me, if you dislike me not too much."

LA DUCHESSE DE BERRI.

At length, on the afternoon of a bright summer's day, she came—eager and impatient—though attended by all royal etiquette, through the Forest of Fontainebleau, where, on an open greensward space, stood Louis XVIII., his nephew, the bridegroom, Duc de Berri, with the Duc and Duchesse d'Angoulême, ready to receive her.

A carpet had been placed on the ground, and, according to punctilio, the King ought to have advanced upon one-half of this carpet, and the bride to have met him upon its centre. But before His Majesty—slow in movement from complicated infirmities—could perform his part of this ceremony, the bride, a small but ardent creature, with blue eyes, quick tiny feet, and fair floating hair, came swiftly towards him, and, with all the passion of her Italian nature, flung herself into his arms. Then, discerning quickly, by some womanly instinct, which was the Prince who, although personally yet unknown to her, was already her husband, she did " press his hand " in a way to please him much, and instantly after this she seemed to seek a shelter for her blushing face upon the bosom of the woman, the Princess, whom she had come to supplant.

The Duchesse d'Angoulême embraced her with tender emotion, and the Duc d'Angoulême also proved himself nobly worthy of this occasion, which was likely to give his younger brother a lasting ascendancy over him; and when, a few days afterwards, the marriage of the Duc and Duchesse de Berri was celebrated in public, with great pomp, at Notre Dame, most conspicuously, yet meekly, stood the Duc and Duchesse d'Angoulême near the newly-wedded pair, whilst

prayers for posterity were being invoked in behalf of the latter.

In honour of this marriage splendid *fêtes* fast succeeded each other at the Tuileries; but though the Duchesse d'Angoulême presided at these festivities, the Duchesse de Berri shone forth as their chief central charm, for this young Princess was happy in her newly-wedded life.

The brilliant little palace of the Elysée, in the near neighbourhood of the Tuileries, was accorded as a residence to the Duc and Duchesse de Berri, and the receptions there held by them, including all the chief nobility of France, and not excluding illustrious champions of literature, art, and science, soon helped to make the youthful hostess popular. She had as yet lived only seventeen summers of a bright life, and her husband, though in fact almost old enough to be her father, was of such gay and buoyant disposition that he was quite ready to share with her all the animated amusements in which she delighted.

Political storms often menaced France, but from these the popular Prince and Princess, who here just now stand foremost, had all the less to fear, because their, as yet, only surviving child was a girl, and therefore, by no possibility according to the Salic law of France, an heir to the throne.

Unclouded, therefore, seemed their happiness when on Shrove Tuesday—the last day before Lent, in the year 1820, —they determined to show themselves at the Opera, where three pieces, *Le Carnaval de Venise, Le Rossignol* and *Les Noces de Gamache,* were to be performed. Almost all the members of the Royal Family were at the opera that night,

and most pleasing of them all to behold was the Duchesse de Berri, in full evening costume, with diamonds and flowers upon her head and breast.

Le Carnaval de Venise was just then a great success in Paris, and the excited audience was all the more delighted with this representation of the piece, because between its acts public curiosity was gratified by observing how the Duc and Duchesse de Berri left their own box to pay visits to that of the Duc d'Orléans (afterwards Louis Philippe, King of the French), and other of their Royal relatives.

Presently when the Duchesse de Berri had returned to her own seat, she complained of fatigue, and her husband recommended her instant departure, promising that he himself would remain to the end of the entertainment.

This being agreed upon, she left her box, leaning upon his arm, and thus reached her carriage. "*Adieu*" or "*Au revoir*" merrily cried out the Duc de Berri as his wife was about to start for what they both supposed would be but an hour's separation from each other. "Adieu, Caroline, we shall quickly meet again."

The carriage was about to start, its royal occupant leaning forward to wave her hand playfully in answer to her husband's words, when suddenly she saw him stagger backwards, against the wall of the theatre, as though struck by a fatal blow, signs of which she had also perceived, like one who sees things in a moment of time during some horribly vivid dream, for an assassin had rushed round the corner of the Rue Richelieu, and stabbed her husband to the heart.

Forgetful of danger to herself, she leapt from her carriage,

and, in another instant, having flown up the steps of the theatre, she flung her arms round the being most dear to her on earth, and, clinging to him thus, she was, together with him, dragged into the vestibule of the Opera House, he gasping some attempted words to comfort her, and she, bathed in his blood, which, flowing profusely from the wound he had received, stained her hair, her dress, the flowers, and the diamonds which she wore.

As the wounded Prince seemed to gasp for air, he was, after midnight, transported by his weeping attendants to another and more spacious part of the theatre, from whence the gay audience had vanished, never dreaming of the frightful tragedy which was going on there, now that the lights were dim, and the flowers fading in that scene of the brilliant spectacle witnessed but an hour since.

The chill dawn of a February morning was approaching, and the cold hand of death pressed more and more heavily on the Duc de Berri, by whose wounded side his wife still crouched in despair. Her husband's sympathy was with her more than with himself at that dread time, the King and all the Royal Family stood or knelt in various attitudes of misery near the blood-stained couch of the dying Prince, when suddenly the latter said aloud to his wife: "My love, be not thus overwhelmed by grief, but control yourself for the sake of the child, the yet unborn child within thee."

As though by an electric shock everybody present was startled at these words, for by them was proclaimed that all hope of legitimate succession to the throne of France would not expire with the Prince who uttered them,—the Prince

who was thus the first to announce in his own hour of death the coming hour of the birth of his posthumous son, called by the French legitimists Henry V., but best known to the world at large as the Comte de Chambord.

His mother had mournfully secluded herself during the seven months and fifteen days of her widowhood before the date of his birth (September 29, 1820), and although residing at the Tuileries, it was but rarely that she was seen. Pale, careworn, clad in deepest mourning, she was a melancholy spectacle to the few who were privileged to approach her; but after the birth of her son, it was as though a new life sustained her; and, reanimated by hope, inspired by a strong resolution to win popularity, to confront every danger for his sake, she at length re-appeared in the Parisian world, of which she eventually became the brilliant centre. Popular discontent concerning various political measures of the day was rife in the capital of France. The Duchesse d'Angoulême, reverenced as a saint, was far more fit for a cloister than a court; the health of the King was failing fast; his brother and successor, the Comte d'Artois, was likewise more than ever a recluse since the death of his son, the Duc de Berri, and it therefore needed all the energy, the renewed life, the fascination of the Duchesse de Berri to sustain popularity in behalf, as she fondly hoped, of her posthumous son's future.

Her hair, cut off by her own hand in the first passionate agony of her widowhood, grew again; her robes of black were gradually replaced by those of more cheerful hue, and by the time that Louis XVIII. was dead and her father-in-law

(Charles X.) succeeded to the throne, she had again made herself celebrated for the splendid, and even somewhat fantastic, *fêtes* inaugurated by her at the Tuileries.

Although extremely young when she was first married, the Duchesse de Berri had even then seen enough of political strife and popular resistance in her native land of Italy not to dread the consequences of a people's discontent with regard to supposed bigotry on the part of Royalty, wherefore it was with extreme pleasure that in the year 1828, just when her son was withdrawn from the hands of his governess, and formally consigned into those representing male authority, that she set forth on a tour through various localities, significant of his various titles, in order to visit the ancient *Château de Chambord,* for from this he derived one of his appellations (the Comte de Chambord), and it had been freely presented to him by loyal Frenchmen, who, having purchased it, declared that their conduct in this matter was only "to do homage to *S. A. R. Monseigneur le Duc de Bordeaux.*"

Political discontent amongst various parties opposed to successive Ministries there had always been, more or less, in France since the Restoration; but, without here attempting to unfold the various real or fancied causes of that discontent, it need only be said that seldom had the Duchesse de Berri appeared more beloved by the French people than when the Revolution of 1830 suddenly proclaimed itself.

She was at St. Cloud with her son, when during those "three memorable July days," familiar to most readers, Paris was in a turbulent state of anarchy, and a new government

was demanded in the person of Louis Philippe, Duc d'Orléans.

Arrived in England, the various members of the Royal Family of France first found a refuge in Dorsetshire, but, by the hospitality of his Britannic Majesty, they soon repaired to the Castle of Holyrood, which had been offered to them as a residence.

The Duchesse d'Angoulême there interested herself much in the education of her niece and nephew, the children of the Duc and Duchesse de Berri; but the mother of these children herself was preparing for the execution of great plans, by which she hoped to regain the throne of France for her son. In her exile, or even perhaps before that date, she had met again the Comte Lucchesi-Palli, a Neapolitan nobleman, who is said by some of her contemporaries to have formed an attachment for her during her early youth in Sicily. Be this as it may, she, after more than ten years of widowhood, was not unmindful of his devotion to her; but none the less did she consecrate herself to the cause of her son, whose father she had loved with the ardour which had since been turned to grief.

And thus it came to pass that, contrary to the will of the royal exiles at Holyrood, she embarked one April night of the year 1832, on her way to Marseilles, from which place, as from every other locality in France, she was forbidden entrance by that law of proscription which had exiled her and her family, but where she knew that an active feeling of loyalty was rife in behalf of her son, the rightful King of France; since her grandfather had abdicated in his favour,

and the Duc d'Angoulême had renounced the succession to the throne.

Though personally disguised, and journeying through various perils under many an *incognita,* she carried in her small but determined hand the fiery brand of civil war. Undaunted by first failures, uncomplaining under terrible privations, in constant danger as to her life and liberty, corresponding by secret agency in cyphers which, being written in white ink, sorely tried her eyes to read, she nevertheless lit up in La Vendée and elsewhere a glorious enthusiasm for what she believed to be the rightful cause of France, in a way to prove that the chivalry of France was, despite all revolutions, yet ardently alive.

If her followers suffered, the Duchesse de Berri, always as far as possible in the midst of them, suffered still more; and, not discouraged by frequent repulses, she made her way through the country from which she was banished by law, and in Brittany found brave men who eagerly armed themselves in behalf of " Henri V.," as her son was, and still is, called by French Royalists. Such increasing faith indeed had this Princess in the loyalty of man—a faith which had been strengthened by her residence in " La Vendée the incorruptible,"—that she forgot the possibility of treachery lurking near her; and consequently, it was at Nantes that she, in the month of November, 1832, was at length captured.

Her conduct was as undaunted by dreary captivity as it had been in face of death, and under the various vicissitudes which had befallen her. But, though a heroine, she was " woman spite of herself "; for in the course of some months,

it was intimated to the world at large, by means of a letter published in the *Moniteur,* but dated from her prison and signed by her name, that she had for some time been privately married to Count Lucchesi-Palli. She was forthwith liberated from the citadel of Blaye, though not to go back to her Royal relatives at Holyrood, for she turned her face towards Sicily, where a home and her husband awaited her. Henceforth her Royal son, the Comte de Chambord, was under the direction of his grandfather, Charles X., and that of his uncle and aunt, the Duc and Duchesse d'Angoulême.

JOAN OF ARC

(1412—1431)

CHARLES KNIGHT

IN the hamlet of Domremy, near Vaucouleurs, a pastoral country watered by the Meuse, dwelt a little cultivator named Jacques d'Arc, with his wife Isabel. They had a daughter, Joan, who was remarkable for her early piety. Her talents were considerable; but she had received no education, and made the mark of a cross at the beginning of the letters which were written at her dictation. She said of herself, "I feared no woman of Rouen in sewing and spinning." When thirteen years of age, she refused to join in the sports of the young people of her hamlet; and secluded herself in the woods and fields, or was found kneeling before the cross in her parish church. This was after the period when the death of Charles VI. had divided France into two great factions; and the vicinity of Domremy to Burgundy had made the feuds of the Burgundians and the Armagnacs familiar to the peasantry. Joan saw the men of her own village violently disputing as to the merits of these parties; but mostly agreed in hatred of the English. She had herself looked upon the extreme misery of the people; and she attributed it, not without justice, to the invasion which had given the crown to an English king at Paris, whilst the true heir

JOAN OF ARC.

was in danger and difficulty. Her enthusiastic nature was stimulated by these united impulses of religion and patriotism; and in her solitary meditations she began to see visions and to hear voices. The first voice which she heard only exhorted her to be pious and discreet; but then came a figure with wings, and commanded her to go to the succour of the King, for that she should recover his kingdom. From time to time she told what she had seen and heard. "My voices have instructed me"—"My voices have commanded me," were her expressions. She seems to have distinctly separated her own supposed revelations from the local superstitions; for there was near her village a wonderful tree, called the Ladies' tree, growing beside a spring with healing properties; and old people said that fairies frequented the place; but she declared that she never saw fairies, and she never went to the tree to make garlands, as others did, from the time she knew she ought to go to the King. Amongst the ridiculous accusations which were afterwards heaped up against her, she was charged with having attended the Witches' Sabbath on every Thursday night at the Fairies' oak of Bourlemont. There was an ancient prophecy, known to the country people, that France should be lost by a woman and saved by a woman. The Queen Isabella, who had brought in the English, was the one. The people now added to the prophecy that a virgin from the marches of Lorraine should be the other. Before 1429, Joan was entirely persuaded that she had a power given her to restore the kingdom to Charles VII.

The voices which Joan heard disclosed to her the practical mode of carrying out her strong idea. They told

her, what would have been her natural conviction, that she must put herself in communication with some great person. She sought the feudal lord of Baudricourt at Vaucouleurs. He sent her away, as one distraught. She told her story to two gentlemen who dwelt near her. "There is no help for France but in me," she said. "I would rather spin by the side of my poor mother, but I must go. My Lord calls me." Her pretensions were spread abroad. The Duke of Lorraine sent for her, to cure him of a malady. She said that she had no heavenly light to remove his disease, and she counselled him to lead a better life than he had been wont to lead. The Duke gave her four francs, and bade her depart.

At last, the Lord of Baudricourt listened to her when she again came before him in her shabby red gown. The people of Vaucouleurs provided her the equipment of a horse and a man's dress; and she went forth on a perilous journey, having received the oaths of John de Novelompont and Bertrand de Poulengi, who had first seriously listened to her pretensions, that they would conduct her safely to the King. They travelled through a wild country in the winter season, taking the most unfrequented routes, and using every care to avoid the Burgundians and the English. She forwarded a letter, which she dictated, to Charles, and at length received permission to proceed to Chinon. Here she arrived after eleven days' travel. Her fame had gone before her. At last she overcame the difficulties of approaching the King. From that moment, when she publicly announced her mission at the Court of Charles, many things which she most probably

did through her own shrewd sense were accounted miraculous. Thus she is recorded to have selected the Prince out of a crowd of attendants; and to have indicated to him an acquaintance with facts only known to himself. It is difficult not to believe that at this stage she had become an instrument in the hands of some persons about the King. Every ostensible precaution, however, appears to have been taken to prevent his cause being committed to an impostor. Her honest life was fully proved; and in the conviction of her sanctity learned doctors, prudent counsellors, and bold warriors agreed that the Maid should be confided in. A suit of armour was prepared for her; and she indicated where a sword could be found, behind the altar of a church, at Fierbois. At the head of a large force, she set out for Orleans, having authority for its command over the best knights of France. At Blois she put on her armour. Marching on the right bank of the Loire, she desired to enter Orleans through the English lines on that side. She was overruled by Dunois, of which she bitterly complained. It was at length decided that boats loaded with supplies should proceed up the river. The day was stormy, and the vessels could make no way. "The wind will change," said the confident girl. It did change, and the supplies and the troops were landed safely about six miles below the city. Meanwhile, the garrison of Orleans made a sortie on the north, which diverted the attention of the besiegers. An hour after sunset Jeanne d'Arc rode into Orleans at the eastern gate mounted on a white horse, her standard, on which was a figure of the Redeemer, being borne before her. The people

by torchlight crowded around her; and she exhorted them to honour God, and to hope in her for their deliverance.

It was the 29th of April when this extraordinary aid, which was firmly believed to be supernatural, arrived to the beleaguered city. In the camp of the English the men would whisper their fears of impending misfortune; for it could not be concealed that a woman, said to be gifted with the spirit of prophecy, was coming to Orleans at the head of a great reinforcement. The shouts that came forth from the populous city on that April night would tell that she was come. The next day a herald from the Pucelle presented himself at the English camp. The respect paid to the messenger of princes was denied to the messenger of a reputed sorceress, and he was threatened to be burnt as a heretic. Another herald came to defy Talbot; and to declare, from the commander of the French, that if the messenger of the Pucelle received any harm, it should be visited upon the English prisoners. These proceedings began to spread alarm amongst the brave yeomen of England, who had fronted so many dangers in the field, but who had a terror of witches and magicians, which was a characteristic of the period.

The soldiers of Suffolk and Talbot looked on in terror and amazement, when, on a tower facing the Tournelles, a form apeared in shining armour, and bade them depart if they would avoid misery and shame. William Glasdale, the commander of the Tournelles, reviled the maiden, and told her to go back to her cows. "Your men will be driven to retreat," she exclaimed, "but you will not live to fly with them." The French waited for succours from other gar-

risons, before they attempted any great operations against the besiegers. Joan was invariably for instant attack, without heeding disparity of numbers or disadvantages of position. Some of the knights were indignant at her assumed authority; but by her resistless force of will she conquered all opposition. The succours at length were at hand. There was no attempt to bring them into the city under cover of darkness, or while the English were engaged in another quarter. At the head of the French knights and soldiers, followed by the people of the town, Joan rode forth with her banner, between the towers of the besiegers. They looked on with wonder; but there was no resistance. When she returned at night, she threw herself exhausted on a bed. Awakened by a noise, she cried out, " My arms! my horse! " She rushed into the street, mounted with her banner, and rode alone to the spot where she heard the clamour. A rash sortie had been made; and the assailants were driven back. When they saw the white horse and the banner of the Maid, they shouted for joy, and followed her out of the gate into the besiegers' lines. After an engagement of three hours, the English fort was taken and set on fire. It was Joan's first battle. She had fought with the courage and address of the most accomplished knight.

The terror of the English after this sortie from the Burgundy gate became more universal. The next day the Pucelle and the chiefs crossed the Loire in a boat, and led an attack upon a fortification on the left bank. She was slightly wounded, and passed the night in the field. The great force of the besiegers was on the right bank of the river; and the Lord of Gaucourt, the Governor of Orleans, was opposed

to this leading forth of the garrison, to leave the city defenceless, while the English were attacked on the left bank. But the daring, confident girl had completely won the real leadership of the soldiers and the citizens. She had returned to Orleans and had told the chiefs that she had much to do on the morrow. Without any concert with the French leaders she rose early in the morning, and went forth with a tumultuous crowd to the Burgundy gate. It was shut against her egress. The Governor was compelled to open it, and she rode out, followed by soldiers and a great multitude. Their counsel being thus rejected, the French knights, with their men at arms, reluctantly followed. But their prudence was soon laid aside in the din of battle. The river had been crossed by Joan, and she had commenced an assault on the Tournelles, the great fort held to be impregnable. The artillery from its walls thinned the ranks of the assailants; but the wonderful Maid was always ready with her rallying cry. She was the first to mount the rampart by a ladder. An arrow struck her, and she fell into the ditch. She was carried off; and after a few natural tears drew the shaft out of her shoulder, and knelt in prayer. The attack had lasted four hours, and nothing had been gained. The retreat was sounded. Joan implored Dunois not to move. "Let our people rest, and eat and drink." Her standard-bearer had remained near the spot whence the Maid was borne away. The Lord of Daubon, who was against a retreat, took the standard, and with another, descended into the ditch; and waving the well-known sign of victory, the French rallied round him. Seeing what was taking place, Joan went for-

ward to claim her standard. The English, who had seen her borne off wounded, felt a new alarm. The French advanced again to the attack of the fort, under their marvellous leader. From the other bank the people of Orleans were storming the Tournelles, having crossed the broken arches of the bridge by beams placed on the buttresses. The English were now between two assaults. The soldiers were filled with a superstitious awe. The maiden was on the battlement of the second tower of the works, the first having been taken. The soldiers, with Glasdale their commander, thus surrounded, were retreating into the main defence upon a wooden bridge, when a cannon-ball struck it, and the commander and his men fell into the stream, and were drowned. The prophetic words of the Maid, when Glasdale reviled her, were accomplished. There was now no chance of resistance to the impassioned assaults of the French. The English threw down their arms and were slaughtered, drowned, or taken prisoners, to the number of seven thousand. No aid came from the panic-stricken camp; and the Maiden passed over the repaired bridge into the city, amidst the shouts of the multitude, whilst every steeple sent forth its peals of gratulating bells, and at every church Te Deum was sung on that night of victory. The next morning, at break of day, the English marched out from their forts, and formed in order of battle to the north and west of the city. They stood in an attitude of defiance, before the walls. Joan had hastily risen, and was soon at the northern gate. "Attack them not," she said. "If they attack you, defend yourselves." It was Sunday the 8th of May. An altar was brought to the gate;

and the priests chanted a solemn service. The English standards were displayed; the trumpets sounded; but they turned their faces from Orleans. The siege was at an end.

It was a false policy of the English chiefs to decry Jeanne d'Arc as a sorceress. It was the ready mode to spread the greatest terror of her exploits amongst their own adherents. The French, with equal confidence, proclaimed her as the favoured of Heaven, who exhibited as much courage as piety. At this juncture, the Duke of Bedford secured the doubtful co-operation of the Duke of Burgundy; and the Cardinal Beaufort, who had raised an army in England for a crusade against the heretics of Bohemia, turned over his troops to the Regent of France, to war against the Armagnacs, and to make new efforts against the enchantments which had given them power to resist the long triumphant bravery of the English. They took the field with new hopes. Onward went the Maid, upon her resolved design that Charles VII. should be crowned at Rheims. On the 17th July, Charles was crowned in its ancient church. There were few nobles present. The Maiden stood with her standard before the altar. The expense of the coronation amounted only to twenty-four Parisian livres. Never was king so inaugurated. All the accustomed pomp was absent; but when the enthusiastic girl kissed the feet of her monarch, her tears were a holier consecration than the mystic oil with which, as the legends told, Clovis had been there baptised. Charles then went on towards Paris, receiving the submission of many towns on his march. Joan thought her mission accomplished; and earnestly desired to return to her father and mother, to keep their herds and flocks. Her

counsels now became vacillating. Sometimes Charles retreated, and sometimes marched forward. Bedford had sent him a challenge to meet in the open field, couched in the most opprobrious terms; and he was moving rapidly to bring the French to an engagement. The two armies suddenly met at Senlis; and for three days a battle was vainly expected. Each army then took its own way—Bedford for Normandy, which had been entered by a hostile force under the constable Richemont. Charles marched on to Paris. On the 12th of September an attack was made at the Faubourg St. Honoré. The intrepid Joan, though she had lost confidence in her miraculous voices, displayed her wonted courage. She scaled the walls; but was wounded, and fell into the fosse. Crawling out from the heaps of dead and dying, she again waved her standard. The old confidence in her powers had deserted the French; and when the attack was repulsed, they reproached her that she had said they should sleep that night in Paris. "You would have slept there," she replied, "if you had fought as I fought." Charles retreated to the Loire. The succeeding winter was passed by the King at Bourges. In the spring the army moved to the relief of Compiègne, which was besieged by the Duke of Burgundy. Joan got into the town, and the same day headed a sortie. She was taken prisoner, and was carried to the Burgundian quarters. Her wars were over.

For four months Joan was confined in the castle of Beaurevoir, near Cambray. She was a prisoner of war to the Burgundians. She was afterwards conveyed to Arras, and to Crotoy; and was finally delivered to the English in

their city of Rouen. The University of Paris urged her trial before an ecclesiastical tribunal; and there are letters from that body, full of reproach to the English for not delivering up their prisoner to the justice of the Church. At length letters patent were issued in the name of Henry VI., in which it was stated that, in accordance with the public opinion, and at the especial request of the Bishop of Beauvais and the University of Paris, she was to be given up to the Bishop, to be examined and proceeded against under his authority. She was subjected for several months to the most searching interrogatories. At fifteen examinations she was never disconcerted, but answered every question with perfect frankness. All the circumstances of her early life were related by her; and her belief in her voices and visions emphatically declared. Her determination to wear the male dress of her triumphs was persisted in. Upon her alleged revelations were founded articles accusing her of sorcery; and upon her declining to submit to the ordinances of the Church, when her voices commanded the contrary, the charge of being a schismatic was also introduced. Heresy and schism, meriting the punishment of fire, were declared to be found against her. The University of Paris ratified the articles of accusation. On a public scaffold at Rouen the sentence of condemnation was read to her by the Bishop of Beauvais. Her courage deserted her; and she expressed her contrition and submission. Her sentence of burning at the stake was then to be commuted to perpetual imprisonment. She was taken back to prison, but after two days her confidence returned; and she re-affirmed her belief that her voices came from God; and

that, not understanding what the adjuration was that she had been called upon to sign, she had signed in the fear of being burnt. She was now a relapsed heretic, in the terms of the cruel zeal of the persecuting ecclesiastics, and her fate was no longer a matter of doubt. In the old market-place of Rouen a pile of wood was built up; and round it a scaffold was erected, where prelates and nobles might sit to behold the death of the heroic girl. There sat Cardinal Beaufort and the Bishop of Beauvais; and as Joan stood before them, a sermon was preached, setting forth her atrocities; and the preacher concluded with, "Joan, go in peace; the Church can no longer protect thee, and delivers thee into secular hands." She was immediately dragged to the pile; the fatal cap of the Inquisition, with the words "*hérétique, relapse, apostate, idolâtre,*" was placed on her head; the fire was kindled. Her last word was "Jesus." On the spot where this deed of infamy was perpetrated, stands one of the monuments by which the French of later times have sought to redeem their share of the disgrace of this murder of the 30th of May, 1431.

HENRIETTA MARIA, DUCHESS OF ORLEANS

(1644—1670)

JOHN HENEAGE JESSE

YOUNGEST daughter of Charles I. Lovely in her person, gay and attractive in her manners, fond of admiration, and not averse to intrigue, she was the idol alike of the French King and of his complaisant courtiers. She was the favourite child and constant companion of her mother, whose religion she embraced and whose country she preferred. With all the vivacity of her fascinating parent, she possessed much of the wit and humour of her brother Charles. Burnet, who is no friend to her character, speaks of her as the wittiest woman in France. She was never even beheld by her unfortunate father.

Henrietta was born in Bedford House, Exeter, in the midst of the civil troubles, on the 16th of June, 1644. Only ten days after her birth, her mother was compelled to resign her to the care of others, being forced to seek refuge in France. She was intrusted by Charles to the beautiful Countess of Morton,* who, true to her trust, contrived to elude the vigilance of the Parliament, and escaped with her young

* Anne, daughter of Sir Edward Villiers (brother to George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham), and wife of Robert Douglas, Earl of Morton.

DUCHESS OF ORLEANS.

charge to Paris. The Princess was scarcely more than two years old when they set out from Oatlands on their hazardous journey. They had disguised her in a coarse grey frock, and as the child naturally missed the bright colours she had been accustomed to, she frequently lisped out her displeasure, assuring every one she spoke to that it was not the dress she had always worn.

The Queen was overjoyed to embrace her child, and from this period they were inseparable. The childhood of the young Princess was passed either in Paris or its vicinity.

The appearance of the youthful Princess was hailed with rapture in the brilliant circles of Paris. At the French Court there were none who could compete with her either in wit or loveliness; and the young King, Louis XIV., was the first to confess the power of her charms.

It is to be feared that, like many of her family, the heart of Henrietta was too susceptible of tender sentiments. Among the foremost of Henrietta's lovers stands the Comte de Guiche. The feeling on both sides is described as ardent and sincere. Another of Henrietta's reputed lovers was the Comte de Treville. When on her deathbed, it is said she repeated in her delirium, *"Adieu, Treville!"* The Count was so much affected by this slight incident, or more probably by the death of his mistress, that he shut himself up for many years in a monastery. When he returned to the world, he was an altered and a devout man.

At the Restoration, Henrietta accompanied her mother to England, where she remained about six months. Pepys says in his *Diary*: "The Princess Henrietta is very pretty, but

much below my expectation; and her dressing of herself with her hair frizzed short up to her ears, did make her seem so much the less to me. But my wife standing near her with two or three black patches on, and well dressed, did seem to me much handsomer than she." On the 31st of March, 1661, while yet scarcely seventeen, she was married to Philip, Duke of Orleans, only brother to Louis XIV., a wicked and narrow-minded voluptuary, with nothing to recommend him but his handsome person.

In May, 1670, Henrietta again visited England, on which occasion she is reported to have confirmed her brother James in his predilection for the Romish faith. Her principal object, however, as is well known, was to persuade Charles to join the French King in a league against the Dutch. Charles, attended by the Duke of York, Prince Rupert, and the Duke of Monmouth, hastened to Dover to receive her on landing. The Court shortly followed, and for a fortnight, which was the extent of her visit, Dover was the constant scenes of splendid rejoicings. It was on this occasion that she is said to have fixed her affections on the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth.

Henrietta was the favourite sister of Charles, and there can be no doubt of the sincerity of his affection. Colbert, the French Ambassador in England, in his despatches, lays great stress on this circumstance. In one of his letters he writes: "Her influence over the King was marked by all; he wept when he parted with her, and whatever favour she asked of him was granted."

Some days after her return to France she desired one of

her attendants to bring her usual beverage, a glass of succory water. She complained at the time that it was very bitter, and being presently attacked by the most excruciating pains, exclaimed several times that she was poisoned; desiring that she might be put to bed, and her confessor instantly sent for. The King of France shortly afterwards arrived, bringing with him his own physician. The latter endeavoured to console her with false hopes, but she persisted in her conviction that she should never recover. Her piety and resolution are described as most exemplary. She told her husband that she had the less fear of death, as she had nothing to reproach herself with in her conduct towards him. Of the French King she took leave with all the grace of former days, telling him that what made her most regret to leave the world was the loss of his friendship and esteem.

She had more than once expressed a strong desire that Montagu, the English Ambassador, should be summoned to her sick chamber; and accordingly he attended, and remained with her till the last. She told him she could not possibly live long, and desired him to convey her most affectionate regards to the King, her brother, and to thank him for all the kindness he had ever shown her. She frequently recurred to the grief which he would feel at her loss. "I have always loved him," she said, "above all things in the world, and should not regret to leave it, but that I leave him." She told Montagu where he would discover her money after her death, desiring him to distribute it among her servants, whom she mentioned by name; she recommended them also in the strongest manner to the protection of Charles. She said

that she had long been on bad terms with her husband, and that he had recently been exasperated by finding her in close conversation with the King of France; but they were discoursing, she said, on affairs which could not be communicated to a third person. Montagu more than once inquired of her in English if she believed herself poisoned, but her confessor caught the expression, and told her she must accuse no one. When Montagu afterwards pressed the question, she shrugged up her shoulders, but said nothing. She had no sooner expired, than her money and papers were seized by her husband. The latter were principally in cypher, and probably baffled his curiosity.

Henrietta died at St. Cloud on the 30th of June, 1670, having just completed her twenty-sixth year. By Philip, Duke of Orleans, she was the mother of three children—Philip, who died young; Maria, married to Charles II., King of Spain; and Anna Maria, who became the wife of Victor Amadeus II., Duke of Savoy, and afterwards King of Sicily and Sardinia. This latter Princess was great-grandmother of Louis XVI., who was beheaded in 1793, that unforunate monarch being the sixth in generation from Charles I.

DIANE DE POITIERS.

DIANE DE POITIERS

(1499—1566)

MADAME BOLLY

DIANE DE POITIERS, eldest daughter of Jean de Poitiers, seigneur of St. Vallier, one of the most ancient families of Dauphiné, was born on the 3d of September, 1499, and not the 14th of March, 1500, as Bayle asserts. At the age of thirteen, she was married to Louis de Brèzé, Comte de Maulevrier, *grand-sénéchal* of Normandy, whose mother was the daughter of Charles VII. and Agnes Sorel.

Diane, to whom the name of *Grande-Sénéchale* was given, lost her husband on the 23d of July, 1531. The conduct of the *grande-sénéchale* was beyond reproach during the lifetime of her husband; she also wished to show her affection for him and to perpetuate his memory. After the death of Louis de Brèzé, she erected a superb mausoleum to his memory in the church of Notre-Dame in Rouen, and she wore mourning all her life; for her colours, even during the time of her greatest favour, were black and white. Diane was thirty-one years old when she became a widow. The Duke of Orléans was only thirteen, so that their love (the period of which has never been exactly fixed), must have begun much later. After the death of the Dauphin, Francis, Diane, beloved by the Duke of Orléans, now become Dauphin, found

herself in collision with the Duchesse d'Estampes, mistress of Francis I. Each had her party; and the hatred of the two rivals broke out more than once in scandalous scenes. The Court was divided between them. The Duchess, younger by ten years, flattered herself that she was more beautiful than Diane and ceaselessly joked about her age, saying that she was born the day that Diane was married. While the Duchesse d'Estampes and her partisans bestowed the name of the *"vieille ridée"* upon Diane, the Dauphin's passion seemed to acquire fresh strength. The beauty of Catherine de' Medici, whom he was about to marry, did not lessen his attachment to Diane, and that Queen was forced to house the favourite. Diane, who during the life of Francis I. had only played a secondary part at Court, saw all the courtiers gather around her upon the death of that Prince, in 1547. From that time she reigned in France through Henry. The first use she made of her power was to exile the Duchesse d'Estampes, to whom, however, she left all her wealth, contenting herself with depriving of employment all those who had enjoyed the Duchesse's favour. Soon afterward Diane changed the entire council, ministry, and Parliament. She took the office of first president of the Parliament of Paris from Pierre Lizet; and she banished the chancellor Olivier, from Court, and gave the seal to Bertrandi. The constable could only retain his power and his influence by shamelessly paying court to the favourite. In October, 1548, the King gave her the Duchy of Valentinois for life, and she took the title of Duchesse de Valentinois. She obtained from Henry II. the right of confirmation; for before the office tax was

established, all those who possessed offices in France were obliged to pay for their confirmation on the accession of every King. The people murmured at this last favour, which Francis had granted only to his mother. Diane used the funds gained in this way to embellish the Château d'Anet, which was celebrated by the poets under the name of Dianet. Philibert Delorme was the architect, and even at this distance of time Anet still gives us an idea of what it was originally.

Diane's age, which made her sway over the King's heart so extraordinary, made several of her contemporaries believe that she had recourse to magic, in order to hold him; and they brought up the old story of Charlemagne's enchanted ring. Such grave authors as Théodore de Bèze and Pasquier did not scorn to adopt the popular prejudice, and the latter even tried to prove it.

Diane's true source of magic was in the charm of her mind, her talents, and her grace; the praises of the wits that she protected prove that she was sensible to the pleasures of poetry and letters; the Muses only offer their incense to those who understand them, and mere recognition would not have inspired the verses of Du Bellay, Ronsard, and Pelletier. Moreover, Diane's beauty lasted for a long time; she put forth every effort to retard the work of years, and she succeeded. She was never ill; and even in the coldest weather she washed her face in rain-water. Waking every morning at six o'clock, she mounted her horse and rode one or two leagues; and on her return went back to bed and read there until noon.

Her features were regular; her complexion the clearest and

most beautiful that was ever seen; and her curling hair as black as jet. Brantôme, who saw her shortly before her death, assures us that she was still beautiful. Mézeray, who treats all the favourites of our Kings badly, does not spare Diane. The Président de Thou attributes to her all the misfortunes of Henry II.'s reign, the breaking of the truce with Spain, which brought about the loss of the Battle of St. Quentin, and caused infinite evils in France, and the persecutions of the Protestants. It would seem, indeed, from the hatred that is manifested against her by the Calvinist writers, that Diane had some share in inspiring Henry with those cruel ideas of intolerance that were pushed to the extreme during his reign. A declared enemy to reform, in her will, Diane disinherited her daughters in case they embraced the new opinions. It is pretended, but not proved, that the Duchesse de Valentinois and Henry II. had a daughter, and that this Prince wished to make her legitimate, which Diane proudly opposed.

Henry II., wounded at a tournament, died on the 10th of July, 1559. As soon as the Prince's condition was hopeless, Catherine de' Medici ordered the Duchesse de Valentinois to retire, and demanded the return of the crown jewels.

"Is the King dead?" Diane asked the messenger.

"No, Madame," replied the latter; "but he will not survive the day."

"I have no longer a master," she replied, "my enemies know that I do not fear them; and when this Prince is no longer, I shall be too much occupied with grief for his loss to be sensible of the trouble that they wish to give me."

Diane knew the Court too well to believe that recognition would count against disgrace; she felt that the greater her influence had been, the more terrible her fall would be. Indeed, all her friends had abandoned her, with the exception of the Constable de Montmorenci, who owed to her his recall to Court.

As soon as the King had expired, Diane retired to Anet, where she died on the 22d of April, 1566, aged sixty-six years.

The King wore Diane's colours all his life. Some authors maintain that the motto of this Prince: *"Donec totum impleat orbem,"* and the crescent that he had engraved upon his coins, were a token of his love for Diane, to whose name this motto alludes. There are also medals upon which the Duchesse de Valentinois is represented with her foot upon a Cupid, with these words: *"Omnium victorem vici"* (I have vanquished the victor of all).

She founded many hospitals, and established a refuge for a dozen poor widows at Anet. Her tomb of marble with her statue was in a chapel at the Château d'Anet; it is now in the *Museum des monuments Français.*

MADAME DES URSINS

(About 1640—1722)

SUTHERLAND MENZIES

AT the outset of that historic period known as the *War of the Spanish Succession* a remarkable feature presents itself in the fact that two women were chosen to be, as it were, its advanced sentinels—the one of the Austrian party in England, the other of the French party in Spain. These were Lady Churchill (wife of the famous soldier, Marlborough), first lady of the bed-chamber to our Queen Anne, and the Princess des Ursins, fulfilling, under the title of *Camerara-Mayor,* the same functions for the new Queen of Spain, Marie-Louise of Savoy, first wife of Philip V.

In the brilliant daughter of the Duc de Noirmoutier, heiress of a name mixed up with all the struggles of the Fronde, we behold a last survivor of the Regency, and the dramatic vicissitudes of a life devoted to the pursuit of political power, have blinded the mental vision of posterity to the grandeur of a work of which that eminent woman was the principal instrument. Proud and restless, as largely dominated as any other of her sex by the vivacity of her preferences and her dislikes, but full of sound sense in her views and in the firmness of her designs, the skilful adviser of a King and Queen of Spain has not received at the hands of

MADAME DES URSINS.

posterity the merit due to an idea pursued with a wonderful perseverance amidst obstacles which would have daunted men even of the strongest resolution. Because her public career ended in a catastrophe, popular opinion, which readily follows success, considers as merely abortive that long career during which her hand sustained upon the brow of a French prince the tottering crown against which the arms of Europe, the distrust of Spain, and the discouragement of France vied in conspiring.

Yet in her girlhood, during the last days of the Fronde, Marie Anne de la Trémouille must early have observed how greatly beauty can aid ambition, and how, by tact, endowments the most frivolous may be brought to the service of interests the most serious and complicated. Married in 1650 to the Prince de Chalais, of the house of Talleyrand, she conceived for her young husband the sole passion to be noted throughout a life in which, especially during its later period, love figured only in the dullest of hues. This marriage took place during the wars of the second Fronde, and at an epoch when a rage for duelling, the anarchical and ruthless effect of Frenchmen's ideas touching the "point of honour," had infused a new element into the spirit of party, and had become a veritable mania. It chanced on the occasion of one of those duels in 1663—that of the two brothers Frette—wherein four fought on either side, and in which the Duc de Beauvilliers was slain, that the Prince de Chalais figured as one of the champions. The law against duelling, enforced by Henri Quatre, and revived with so much rigour by Richelieu against the father of the famous Marshal de Luxembourg, and from

which practice the blood of Bouteville had not completely delivered France, was still in full vigour. The consequences being so terrible, that the Prince de Chalais, to place himself beyond reach of them, was compelled to seek safety in flight. He succeeded in escaping to Spain, whither his wife followed him.

During this brief period of her union with the Prince de Chalais, whom she adored, Marie Anne de la Trémouille had shone as conspicuously by her wit as by her beauty in the famous circle of the Hôtel d'Albret, where she first met Madame Scarron, whose destiny it was later on in life—as Madame de Maintenon—to be so closely allied with the Princess.

Thus united by ties of the tenderest affection, scarcely had the young couple quitted Madrid, after a three-years' sojourn, to establish themselves at Rome, when the death of M. de Chalais left her a childless widow, without protection, and almost destitute—a prey to grief apparently the most profound, and to anxieties concerning the future readily conceivable.

Madame de Chalais was then in the plenitude of that attractive beauty so closely observed and described in all its most delicate shades by the graphic pen of the Duc de Saint-Simon, when at a more advanced period of her life, but on which beauty, by a miracle of art and nature, the wasting hand of time had as yet scarcely brought a blemish.

The first years of her widowhood, passed in a convent, were marked by the liveliest sorrow. By degrees, however, love of society resumed its sway over her, and she reappeared

therein with all her wonted attractiveness, markedly patronised in the highest circles of Roman society by Cardinal d'Estrées, the French ambassador—assuredly not without design, since at that same time that high functionary so distinguished her, he directed the attention of Louis XIV. to the wit and capacity of the charming widow. It was, therefore, in great measure with a political purpose, and by the diplomatic tact of the two brothers d'Estrées, that the second marriage of the Princess de Chalais with Flavio Orsini, Duke di Bracciano, himself a widower, was arranged (1675). Owning as its mistress a woman so abundantly charming, the Palazzo Orsini became more than ever the *rendez-vous* of the best society. The Duchess di Bracciano held therein an actual Court, as numerous also as it was distinguished.

At the moment when the Court of Versailles very earnestly sought the support of the Princess des Ursins, the important business of the Spanish succession engrossed the attention of all the politicians of Europe.

It became necessary to choose a *Camerara-Mayor* for the young Queen. Madame des Ursins had given Louis XIV. ample proof of her devotion; she had in some sort enchained him: she could, therefore, with so much the more security invoke the gratitude of his Court, which feeling, under existing circumstances, it was advisable for the cabinet of Versailles to make manifest. Thoroughly secure in that quarter, she wrote direct to the Duke of Savoy,—Philip V., making his father-in-law comprehend that it was the wish of France to see her installed in such post,—and the Duke of Savoy referred the matter to Louis XIV. From that

moment her elevation was certain. Such choice was the consummation of French policy.

There is something very striking, indeed, in that indomitable resolution one day to govern Spain, conceived and adopted so far from the theatre of events—to exercise the functions of *Camerara-Mayor* to a queen of thirteen years of age, when to obtain that exalted guardianship in Court and State, every ambitious heart was throbbing from the Alps to the Pyrenees. Yet Madame des Ursins importuned no one, for no one had thought of her, Louis XIV. no more than his ministers, the Duke of Savoy no more than the King of Spain; but that remarkable woman had mentally aimed at that as the supreme object and end of her aspirations. For its realisation she combined her measures, therefore, with an activity so ardent, with an accuracy of perception so marvellous through the mesh of intrigues which spread from Versailles to Turin and to Madrid, that she succeeded in getting herself accepted simultaneously by the three courts, through letting them think that the choice of her individuality had been for each of them the effect of a spontaneous inspiration. It was, therefore, with a paraphernalia almost regal that Madame des Ursins set forth to conduct the Princess of Savoy to her husband. Our heroine was then in her fifty-ninth year (1701), according to most authorities; in her sixty-second, according to others; and either age would have been for any one else the period for retreat. But by the rare privilege of a singular energy, physical and moral, still beautiful, and having as yet only prepared herself for playing the grand part of her life's drama, she was

about to make that advanced age a point of departure in her militant career, the outset of a new existence. Her ambition, moreover, could not have had a more brilliant and legitimate aim than that of associating herself in the glorious task of France become the instructress of Spain; and Madame des Ursins, who joined to her own the aspirations of the other sex, entered upon her new mission with a zeal, an ardour, and an activity more than virile.

Early in 1714 died very suddenly, at the age of twenty-six, Marie Louise of Savoy, her delicate frame worn out by an ardent temperament, which had sustained it whilst the storm raged, and which declined when the breath of the hurricane had ceased to kindle it further. The remains of the young Queen had scarcely descended into the vaults of the Escurial ere the nation demanded to know who was to be the new queen-consort; and the same question was addressed to Madame des Ursins by the Court of Versailles.

She was anxious to find a consort who could replace in her interests Marie Louise, and restore her waning influence. Her incertitude was great: she felt truly that in spite of past services her future fate depended upon her choice. At length she cast her eyes upon Elizabeth Farnese, daughter of the last Duke of Parma, and niece of the then existing Duke, and thought that gratitude for such an extraordinary turn of fortune would forever secure the attachment of a princess who, without her influence, could never have had pretensions to such a union. But she was anxious to ascertain whether Elizabeth Farnese was one of those who would submit to be ruled, and she opened her mind upon the subject to a man

then obscure but afterwards celebrated—Alberoni, who had been sent as consular agent from Parma to Madrid. He had frequent conversations with the great favourite, and readily succeeded in insinuating himself into her good graces. He described the Princess of Parma as simple-minded, religious, ignorant of the world from which she had always lived secluded,—in short, perfectly fitting to forward the design of the Princess. In making such statements he reckoned at the same time upon pleasing his own Court and bringing about the fall of Madame des Ursins; for he knew well that Elizabeth, whose character was very different from that which he had represented, would not submit to be governed by any one.

Whether the indiscretions of others had revealed to her the true character of Elizabeth Farnese, whether she had foreseen the manœuvres of the Inquisition with the future Queen, whether she had dreaded the anger of Louis XIV., who had not been consulted, whether the triumphant attitude of her enemies had opened her eyes, certain it is, however, that the Princess attempted to break off the match. But it was in vain that she despatched a confidential agent to Parma for that purpose. On his arrival, the messenger was thrown into prison and threatened with death, and so failed in his mission. The marriage by procuration was celebrated on the 16th of August, 1714. That unskilful and tardy opposition released the Princess Farnese from all feelings of gratitude, furnished the enemies of Madame des Ursins with a deadly weapon, by appearing to justify their accusations in a striking manner, and so prepared her ruin.

Her disgrace was prompt, cruel, decisive. The plan had evidently been concerted long beforehand.* Confirmed in her design by her interview at Saint Jean de Lux with the Queen Dowager, widow of Charles II., and at Pampeluna with Alberoni, Elizabeth held on her way to Madrid. The King advanced to meet her on the road to Burgos, and Madame des Ursins went on before as far as the little town of Xadraque. When the Queen arrived there on the 23d of December, 1714, Madame des Ursins received her with the customary reverences. Afterwards, having followed her into a cabinet, she perceived her instantly change her tone. By some it is said that Madame des Ursins, being desirous of finding fault with something about the Queen's head-dress, whilst she was at her toilette, the latter treated it as an impertinence, and immediately flew into a rage. Others relate (and these different accounts tally with each other in the main) that Madame des Ursins having protested her devotedness to the new Queen and assured Her Majesty "that she might always reckon upon finding her stand between the King and herself, to keep matters in the state in which they ought to be on her account, and procuring her all the gratifications which she had a right to expect—the Queen, who had listened quietly enough so far, took fire at these last words, and replied that she did not want any one

* "I only ask one thing of you," wrote Elizabeth Farnese to Philip V., "that is the dismissal of Madame des Ursins"; and the King had replied: "At least do not spare your blow; for if she only talk to you for a couple of hours she will enchain you, and hinder us from sleeping together, as happened to the late Queen."—DUCLOS.

near the King; that it was an impertinence to make her such an offer, and that it was presuming too much to dare to address her in such a fashion." This much is certain, that the Queen, outrageously thrusting Madame des Ursins out of her cabinet, summoned M. d'Amezaga, lieutenant of the body-guard, who commanded the escort, and ordered him to arrest the Princess, to make her get immediately into a carriage, and have her driven to the French frontiers by the shortest road, and without halting anywhere. As d'Amezaga hesitated, the Queen asked him whether he had not received a special command from the King of Spain to obey her in everything and without reserve—which was quite true. Madame des Ursins was arrested, therefore, and carried off instantaneously, just as she was, in her full dress of ceremony, and hurried across Spain as fast as six horses could drag her. It was mid-winter—no provisions to be found in the inns of Spain; no beds; not a change of clothes—the ground covered with frost and snow; and the Princess was then in her seventy-second year. A lady's maid and two officers of the guard accompanied her in the carriage.

Having reached St. Jean de Lux, Madame des Ursins wrote to Versailles, and shortly afterwards despatched thither one of her nephews. The Great Monarch was compelled to be guided by the decision of his grandson; Madame de Maintenon replied by evasive compliments. The Princess could then see that all was at an end, as regarded her resumption of power. She pursued her way through France and arrived in Paris. The King received her coldly; her stay in France was not prolonged without difficulty. Moreover,

she saw the approaching decease of Louis XIV., and a Regency under the Duke of Orleans. Their old quarrels, the open hatred which had since existed between them, causing her uneasiness and misgivings, she resolved to quit France. She wished to visit the Low Countries, but was not permitted. She proceeded to Savoy, thence to Genoa, and at last returned to Rome, where she once more fixed her abode. There a suitable existence was secured to her, for Philip kept his promise, and caused her pension to be punctually paid.

Habituated to the stir of courts and the excitement of state affairs, she could not condemn herself, notwithstanding her age, to an absolute repose. Prince James Stuart, called *the Pretender,* having withdrawn to Rome, Madame des Ursins attached herself to him and his fortunes; she did the honours of his house: and thus she remained until her death, which took place December 5, 1722, at the age of four-score and upwards.

"Rather tall than short of stature, she was a brunette with blue eyes, whose expression instantly responded to everything that pleased her; with a perfect shape, a lovely bosom, and a countenance which, without regularity of feature, was more charming even than the purely symmetrical. Her air was extremely noble, and there was something majestic in her whole demeanour, and a grace so natural and continual in all she did, even in things the most trivial and indifferent, that I have never seen anyone approach to, either in form or mind. Her wit was copious and of all kinds. She was flattering, caressing, insinuating, moderate, desirous to please

for pleasing's sake, and with charms irresistible when she strove to persuade and win over. Accompanying all this, she possessed a grandeur that encouraged rather than repelled. A delightful tone of conversation, inexhaustible and always amusing—for she had seen many countries and peoples. A voice and way of speaking extremely agreeable and full of sweetness. She had read much and reflected much. She knew how to choose the best society, how to receive it, and could even have held a Court; was polite and distinguished; and, above all, careful never to take a step in advance without dignity and discretion. She was eminently fitted for intrigue, in which, from taste, she had passed her time at Rome. With much ambition, but of that vast kind far above her sex and the common run of men—a desire to occupy a great position and to govern. An inclination to gallantry and personal vanity were her foibles, and these clung to her until her latest days; consequently she dressed in a way that no longer became her, and as she advanced in life departed further from propriety in this particular. She was an ardent and excellent friend—of a friendship that time and absence never enfeebled; and therefore an implacable enemy, pursuing her hatred even to the infernal regions. Whilst caring little for the means by which she gained her ends, she tried as much as possible to reach them by honest means. Secret, not only for herself, but for her friends, she was yet of a decorous gaiety, and so governed her humours, that at all times and in everything she was mistress of herself."

Such was the Princess des Ursins, as sketched by that

painstaking limner, Saint-Simon; throughout whose *Memoirs* many other scattered traits are to be found of this celebrated woman, who so long and so publicly governed the Court and Crown of Spain, and whose fate it was to make so much stir in the world alike by her reign and her fall.

MADAME DU BARRY

(1746—1793)

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE

MADAME DU BARRY, mistress of Louis XV., died at a short interval from Bailly. This woman had as a child commenced the traffic of her charms. Her marvellous beauty had attracted the notice of the purveyors to the King's pleasures. They had raised her from obscure vice to offer to her the scandal of crowned infamy. Louis XV. had formed of the rank of his mistresses a kind of institution of his Court. Mademoiselle Lange Vaubernier, under the name of Madame du Barry, had succeeded to Madame de Pompadour. Louis XV. required the sort of scandal to season his palled appetite. Therein consisted his majesty. The only respect which he imposed upon his Court was the respect of his vices. Madame du Barry had reigned under his name. The nation, it must be owned, had most shamefully submitted to this yoke. The nobility, the ministry, the clergy, philosophers, all had adulated the idol of the King. Louis XIV. had prepared their minds to this servitude by causing his courtiers to adore the despotism of his amours.

Still young at the death of Louis XV., Madame du Barry had been sequestered for some months in a convent, for the

MADAME DU BARRY.

sake of decency—a characteristic of the new reign. Soon freed from this confinement, she had lived in a splendid retreat near Paris—the Pavillon de Luciennes—on the borders of the forest of St. Germain. Immense riches, the gifts of Louis XV., rendered her exile almost as brilliant as her reign. The old Duke de Brissac remained attached to the favourite. He loved her still for her beauty, at the time when others loved her for her rank. Madame du Barry abhorred the Revolution, that reign of the people who despised courtesans and who spoke of virtue. Although repulsed from the court of Louis XVI. and by Marie Antoinette, she had lamented their misfortunes, deplored their fate, and had devoted herself to the cause of the throne and of emigration.

After the 10th of August she made a journey to England. In London she wore mourning for Louis XVI., and consecrated her immense fortune to relieve the miseries of the emigrants in exile. But the greater part of her riches had been secretly buried by her and the Duke de Brissac at the foot of a tree in her park at Luciennes. After the death of the Duke de Brissac, massacred at Versailles, Madame du Barry did not desire to confide to any one the secret of her treasure. She resolved to return to France, to disinter her diamonds, and carry them to London.

She had confided in her absence the care and administration of Luciennes to a young negro, named Zamore. She had brought up this child, through a womanish caprice, as one rears a domestic animal. She caused herself to be painted by the side of this black, to resemble in her portraits,

by the contrast of countenance and colour, the Ventian countesses of Titian. She had conceived for this negro the tenderness of a mother. Zamore was ungrateful and cruel. He was intoxicated with revolutionary liberty. He had caught the fever of the people. Ingratitude appeared to him the virtue of the oppressed. He betrayed his benefactress; he denounced her treasures; he delivered her to the Revolutionary committee of Luciennes, of which he was a member. Madame du Barry, elevated and enriched by favouritism, perished by a favourite. Judged and condemned without discussion, shown to the people as one of the stains of the throne, of which it was necessary to purify the air of the republic, she went to death amid the yells of the populace and the contempt of the indifferent. She was still in the brilliancy of hardly matured age. Her beauty, yielded to the executioner, was her crime in the sight of the crowd. She was dressed in white. Her black hair, cut behind the head by the scissors of the executioner, left her neck exposed. Her locks in front of the head, which the executioner had not shortened, floated and covered her eyes and her cheeks: she lifted her head and threw them back, in order that her countenance might move the people. She did not cease to invoke pity, in the most humiliating terms. Tears flowed incessantly from her eyes upon her bosom. Her piercing cries prevailed over the noise of the wheels and the clamour of the multitude. It seemed as if the knife struck this woman beforehand, and deprived her a thousand times of life.

"Life! life!" she cried; "life for my repentance!—life

for all my devotion to the Republic!—life for all my riches to the nation!"

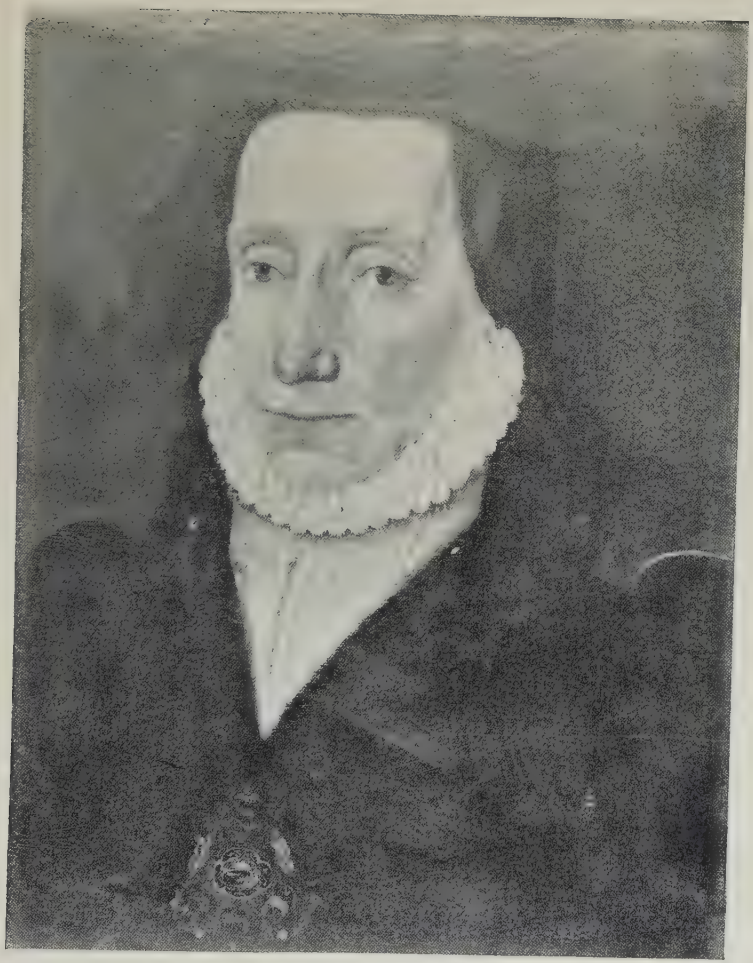
The people laughed and shrugged their shoulders. They showed her, by signs, the pillow of the guillotine, upon which her charming head was about to sleep. The passage of the courtesan to the scaffold was but one lamentation. Under the knife she still wept. The Court had enervated her soul. She alone, among all the women executed, died a coward, because she died neither for opinion, for virtue, nor for love, but for vice. She dishonoured the scaffold as she had dishonoured the throne.

MARGARET DOUGLAS, COUNTESS OF LENNOX

(1515—1578)

T. F. HENDERSON

LADY MARGARET DOUGLAS, Countess of Lennox, mother of Lord Darnley, was the daughter of Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII., and Queen Dowager of James IV. by her second marriage to Archibald, sixth Earl of Angus. She was born October 8, 1515, at Harbottle Castle, Northumberland, then garrisoned by Lord Dacre, her mother being at the time in flight to England on account of the proscription of the Earl of Angus. The next day she was christened by the name of Margaret "with such provisions as couthe or might be had in this baron and wyld country." In May, she was brought by her mother to London and lodged in the palace of Greenwich, where the young Princess Mary, four months her junior, was also staying. In the following May, she accompanied her mother to Scotland, but when her parents separated three years afterwards, Angus, recognising the importance of having a near heiress to both thrones under his own authority, took her from her mother and placed her in the stronghold of Tantallon. It is probable that she accompanied Angus in his exile into France in 1521. When Angus was driven from power in 1528, he sought refuge for his daughter in Norham Castle.



COUNTESS OF LENNOX.

Thence she was removed to the care of Thomas Strangeways at Berwick, Cardinal Wolsey, her godfather, undertaking to defray the expenses of her maintenance. The fall of Wolsey shortly afterwards prevented the fulfilment of this promise, and Strangeways, after bringing her to London, in 1531, wrote to Cromwell on August 1 that, if the King would finish the hospital of Jesus Christ at Branforth, he would consider himself well paid "in bringing to London and long keeping" of her, and "for all his services in the King's wars." Shortly after her arrival she was placed by Henry in the establishment at Beaulieu of the Princess Mary, with whom she formed an intimate friendship. This friendship does not seem to have suffered any diminution, even when the Lady Margaret, on the birth of Elizabeth, was made her first lady of honour, and succeeded in winning the favour of Anne Boleyn. Castillon, writing to Francis I. of France, March 16, 1534, reports that Henry has a niece whom he keeps with the Queen, his wife, and treats like a queen's daughter, and that if any proposition were made to her he would make her dowry worth that of his daughter Mary. The ambassador adds that, "the lady is beautiful and highly esteemed here." By the act passed after the death of Anne Boleyn, declaring the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth illegitimate, the Lady Margaret was necessarily advanced to the position of the lady of highest rank in England; and although her half-brother, James V. of Scotland, was now the nearest heir to the English throne, her claims, from the fact that she had been born in England, and was under Henry's protection, were supposed completely

to outrival his. Through the countenance of Anne Boleyn an attachment had sprung up between the Lady Margaret and Anne Boleyn's uncle, Lord Thomas Howard, and a private betrothal had taken place between them just before the fall of the Queen. This being discovered, Lady Margaret was on June 8 sent to the Tower. As she there fell sick of intermittent fever, she was removed to less rigorous confinement in the Abbey of Syon, near Isleworth, on the banks of the Thames, but did not receive her liberty till October 29, 1557, two days before her lover died in the Tower.

The birth of Prince Edward altered her position. Henry, conscious of the questionable legitimacy of the Prince, resolved to place her in the same category in regard to legitimacy as the other two princesses. He obtained sufficient evidence in Scotland to enable him plausibly to declare that her mother's marriage with Angus was "not a lawful one," and matters having been thus settled the Lady Margaret was immediately restored to favour, and made first Lady to Anne of Cleves, a position which was continued to her under Anne's successor, Catherine Howard. She, however, soon again incurred disgrace for a courtship with Sir Charles Howard, third brother of the Queen, and was in the autumn of 1541 again sent to Syon Abbey. To make room for the Queen, who a few months later came under a heavier accusation, she was on November 13 removed to Kenninghall, Cranmer being instructed previous to her removal to admonish her for "overmuch lightness," and to warn her to "beware the third time and wholly apply herself to please the

King's majesty." The renewal of her father's influence in Scotland after the death of James V. restored her to the favour of Henry, who wished to avail himself of the services of Angus in negotiating a betrothal between Prince Edward and the infant Mary of Scotland. On July 10, 1543, she was one of the bridesmaids at the marriage of Henry to Catherine Parr. A year afterwards Henry arranged for her a match sufficiently gratifying to her ambition, but also followed by a mutual affection between her and her husband, which was an element of purity and gentleness in a household credited with dark political intrigues. On July 6, 1544, she was married at St. James's Palace to Matthew Stewart, Earl of Lennox, who in default of the royal line claimed against the Hamiltons the next succession to the Scottish throne. Lennox was appointed Governor of Scotland in Henry's name on condition that he agreed to surrender to Henry his title to the throne of Scotland, and to acknowledge him as his supreme lord. Shortly after the marriage Lennox embarked on a naval expedition to Scotland, leaving his wife at Stepney Palace. Subsequently she removed to Templenewsam, Yorkshire, granted by Henry VIII. to her husband, who at a later period joined her there. Having escaped from Henry's immediate influence, she began to manifest her Catholic leanings, deeply to Henry's offence, who had a violent quarrel with her shortly before his death, and by his last will excluded her from the succession. During the reign of Edward VI., she continued to reside chiefly in the north, but with Mary's accession her star was once more in the ascendant. Mary made her her special friend

and confidante, gave her apartments in Westminster Palace, bestowed on her a grant of revenue from the taxes on the wool trade, amounting to three thousand marks annually, and, above all, assigned her precedency over Elizabeth. It was, in fact, to secure the succession of Lady Margaret in preference to Elizabeth that an effort was made to convict Elizabeth of being concerned in the Wyatt conspiracy. Elizabeth, notwithstanding this, on succeeding to the throne, received her with seeming cordiality and kindness, but neither bestowed on her any substantial favours, nor was in any degree deceived as to her sentiments. Lady Lennox found that she could better serve her own purposes in Yorkshire than at Court, and Elizabeth, having already had experiences which made confidence in her intentions impossible, placed her and her husband under vigilant espionage. The result was as she expected, and there cannot be the least doubt that Lady Lennox's Yorkshire home had become the centre of Catholic intrigues. No conspiracy of a sufficiently definite kind for exposure and punishment was at first discovered, but Elizabeth, besides specially excluding her from the succession, brought into agitation the question of her legitimacy. Lady Lennox manifested no resentment. She prudently determined, since her own chances of succeeding to the throne of England were at least remote, to secure, if possible, the succession of both thrones to her posterity by a marriage between her son, Lord Darnley, and Queen Mary of Scotland, who was next heir to Elizabeth. Though the progress of the negotiations cannot be fully traced, it must be supposed that the arrangement, if not incited by the Catholic powers, had

their special approval. For a time it seemed that the scheme would miscarry. Through the revelation of domestic spies it became known prematurely. She was, therefore, summoned to London, and finally her husband was sent to the Tower, while she and Lord Darnley were confined in the house of Sir Richard Sackville at Sheen. While there an inquiry was set on foot in regard to her treasonable intentions towards Elizabeth. It cannot be supposed that Elizabeth became satisfied of the sincerity of her friendship, but Lady Lennox wrote her letters with so skilful a savouring of flattery that gradually Elizabeth exhibited symptoms of reconciliation. She received her liberty, and soon afterwards she and her husband became "continual courtiers," and were "made much of," while their son, Lord Darnley, won Elizabeth's high commendation by his proficiency on the lute. The suspicions of Elizabeth being thus for the time lulled, Lennox was, in September, 1564, permitted to return to Scotland, carrying with him a letter from Elizabeth recommending Mary to restore him and his wife to their estates. Through the expert diplomacy of Sir James Melville, on whom Lady Lennox left the impression that she was "a very wyse and discret matroun," Darnley was even permitted to join his father, and to visit Scotland at the very time that Elizabeth was recommending Leicester as a husband for Mary. Lady Lennox also took advantage of the return of Melville to Scotland to entrust him with graceful presents for the Queen, the Earl of Moray, and the secretary, Lethington, "for she was still in good hope," says Sir James, "that hir son, my Lord Darley, suld com better speid the

Erle of Leycester, anent the marriage with the quen." The important support of Morton to the match was ultimately also secured by her renunciation of her claims to the Earldom of Angus. Elizabeth, on discovering too late how cleverly she had been outwitted, endeavoured to prevent, or delay, the marriage by committing Lady Lennox to some place where she might "be kept from giving or receiving intelligence." On April 22 she was commanded to keep her room, and on June 20 she was sent to the Tower. In the beginning of March, 1566-67, after Darnley's murder, she was removed to her old quarters at Sheen, and shortly afterwards was set at liberty. While her husband made strenuous but vain efforts to secure the conviction of Bothwell for the murder, Lady Lennox was clamorous in her denunciation of Mary to the Spanish ambassador in London. For several years the event at least suspended the quarrel with Elizabeth.

It suited the policy of Elizabeth that in May, 1570, Lennox should be sent into Scotland with troops under the command of Sir William Drury to aid the King's party, and with her sanction he was, on the death of Moray, appointed Regent. Lady Lennox, so long as her husband was Regent, remained as hostile to Mary as ever. She was the principal medium of communication between Lennox and Elizabeth, and also gave him continual assistance and encouragement in his difficult position. The most complete confidence and faithful affection is expressed in the letters between her and her husband; but it cannot be affirmed that she succeeded in rendering his Regency a success; and his death on September

4, 1571, at Stirling was really a happy deliverance to the supporters of the cause of her grandson, the young Prince. The last words of Lennox were an expression of his desire to be remembered to his "wife Meg." Her grief was poignant and perpetual, and she caused to be made an elaborate memorial locket of gold in the shape of a heart, which she wore constantly about her neck or at her girdle. It was bought by Queen Victoria at the sale of Horace Walpole's effects in 1842.

In October, 1574, Lady Lennox set out with her son, Charles, for the north, ostensibly with the intention of going to Scotland. Before setting out, she asked Elizabeth if she might go to Chatsworth, as had been her usual custom, whereupon Elizabeth advised her not, lest it should be thought she "should agree with the Queen of Scots." "And I asked Her Majesty," writes Lady Lennox, "if she could think so, for I was made of flesh and blood, and could never forget the murder of my child; and she said, 'Nay, by her faith, she could not think so that ever I could forget it, for if I would I were a devil.'"

She met the Duchess of Suffolk at Huntingdon, where they were visited by Lady Shrewsbury and her daughter, Elizabeth Cavendish, and on Lady Shrewsbury's invitation Lady Lennox and her son went to her neighbouring house at Rufford. Thereafter, as her son had, as she ingenuously put it, "entangled himself so that he could have none other," he and Elizabeth Cavendish were hastily united in wedlock. As soon as the news reached Elizabeth, she summoned Lady Lennox to London, and towards the close of December both

she and the Countess of Shrewsbury were sent to the Tower.

If Lady Lennox had previous to this been unreconciled to Mary, her experience of imprisonment seems to have completely changed her sentiments. While in the Tower she wrought a piece of point lace with her own grey hairs, which she transmitted to the Queen of Scots as a token of sympathy and affection. She received her pardon some time before the death of her son in the spring of 1577 of consumption, but she did not long survive his loss, dying March 7, 1577-78. She had four sons and four daughters, but all predeceased her, although her two grandchildren, James I., son of Lord Darnley, and Arabella Stuart, daughter of Charles, fifth Earl of Lennox, survived. Chequered as her life had been by disappointment and sorrow, in its main purpose it was successful, for her grandson, James VI., succeeded to the inheritance of the English as well as the Scottish Crown. To the very last she sacrificed her own comfort and happiness to effect this end. Whatever might have been her opinions as to Mary's innocence or guilt, she would have refrained from expressing them so long as she thought her main purpose could have been promoted by friendship with Elizabeth. In her last years she ceased to seek Elizabeth's favour, and after her restoration to liberty was not permitted even to hold her Yorkshire estates in trust for her grandson. Mary, Queen of Scots, in an unfinished will in 1577, formerly restored to her "all the rights she can pretend to the Earldom of Angus," and in September of this year the Countess made a claim for the inheritance of the Earldom

of Lennox for her granddaughter, the Lady Arabella, but the latter claim achieved as little for her as the expression of her sovereign wishes. At her death her poverty was so extreme that she was interred at royal cost. She was buried in Westminster Abbey in the vault of her son, Charles.

CATHERINE DE' MEDICI

(1519—1589)

ANNIE FORBES BUSH

GRAND NIECE of Leo X., and only daughter of Laurent de' Medici, Duc d'Urbin, and of Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne Lauraquais, Catherine de' Medici was born in Florence in 1519, and educated in the bosom of her family, who governed that country with much celebrity.

On her marriage with the young Duke of Orleans, afterwards Henry II., in 1533, her uncle, Pope Clement VII., conducted her himself to Marseilles, where the ceremony was performed, and presented her on the occasion with a dower of three hundred thousand crowns.

During the first year of her marriage the young princess politically avoided all appearance of ambition, in a court already occupied by the two rivals Diana of Poitiers and the Duchesse d'Estampes, with both of whom she continued to live in the greatest harmony. She also displayed great tenderness for Francis I., who, gratified by the amiable manners and agreeable conversation of his daughter-in-law, frequently remarked that she was made to command. The King was fond of the chase, and Catherine affected a passion for that species of amusement, by which she repeatedly met with

CATHERINE DE' MEDICI.

serious accidents. She was skilled in archery, and rode gracefully; it was this princess who invented pomelled saddles: she was excessively fond of dancing, and excelled in ballets. By these trifling diversions Catherine deceived the general opinion, which at that time gave her no credit for more than ordinary talent; nevertheless, she observed all, studied politics, traced her future plans, and thus by great sacrifices and perseverance erected the edifice of her power.

The Dauphin, Francis, having been poisoned in 1536, as some historians assert, through Catherine's means, the young Duke of Orleans became heir to the throne, and, as he had no children by Catherine, was desirous of divorcing her; he could not, however, perform this act without the King's acquiescence, and Francis, who was much attached to his daughter-in-law, warmly opposed it. Henry's mistress, Diana of Poitiers, also exerted her influence to prevent the rupture of this marriage, as she felt flattered by the Princess's regard for her and feared that another wife might treat her differently.

When the death of the King raised her husband to the throne, the Queen pursued the same line of conduct, dissimulating her ambitious taste for governing and only studious to render herself popular by her complaisant manners. Perhaps Henry II. discovered the haughty and violent soul of his Queen beneath her gentle exterior, for she possessed no authority, having only the title of Queen, whereas the Duchess of Valentinois was virtually so.

She was crowned at Saint-Denis, by the Cardinal de Bourbon, Archbishop of Lens, and made a solemn entry into

Paris, accompanied by twelve duchesses, amongst whom was Diana d'Angoulême, Henry's natural daughter. However, in 1522, when the King quitted France for his expedition to Germany, he left the Regency to the Queen, who performed nothing worthy of notice beyond conciliating all hearts in order to commence more securely her career of intrigue and crime when she should become mistress of absolute power.

Henry II., who was killed by the Count of Montgomeri at a tournament in honour of the marriage of his daughter Elizabeth with Philip II., King of Spain, left the Regency to his widow. Catherine's first act of power was to dismiss her rival, the Duchess of Valentinois, for whom it was no longer necessary for her to assume the appearance of friendship. Two years after the death of Francis II., which occurred in 1560, Catherine de' Medici, forgetting in her political views that the Duchess of Valentinois had once possessed the heart of her husband, and thinking that her skill in intrigue would be useful to her, recalled her to Court, where Diana willingly seconded her ambitious purposes; but she did not long enjoy the fruits of this reconciliation, having died in 1566.

The kingdom was torn by the factions of the Princess of the blood, the Guises and the Montmorencis, amongst whom she unceasingly created divisions, always attaching herself to the strongest party, which she invariably confounded in the end by her intrigues. By these means she was three times Regent of France,—under Francis II., Charles IX., and Henry III., before his return from Poland.

Catherine made choice of the most approved councillors, amongst whom were the Cardinal of Lorraine; Montluc, Bishop of Valence; Samblancay, Archbishop of Bourges; and, above all, the upright and virtuous Chancellor de l'Hôpital, whose influence lasted too short a time for the welfare of his country.

The Regent was not equally skilful in regard to the Protestants, who attacked her government, and published memoirs, in which she was accused of unlawfully taking part in the administration: the conspiracy of Amboise completely drew upon them the hatred of this arrogant Queen, although she was very indifferent to matters of religion, and at one time even affected an attachment for the Protestants, whose discontents she favoured when necessary to her projects; but in contesting the Regency they committed an offence which she considered quite unpardonable.

During the short reign of her eldest son, Francis II., who ascended the throne in 1559, and died in 1560, Catherine's power wavered; for the King had married Mary Stuart, niece to the Guises, who were rendered all-powerful in France in consequence of the affection of Francis II. for his wife.

On the occurrence of his death, Charles IX. succeeded to the throne, and his minority caused a new Regency; to obtain which Catherine offered, as the price of that power, the lives and liberty of the Prince of Condé and the King of Navarre, both of whom were condemned to death in consequence of their conspiracy at Amboise; and those Princes, preferring life and freedom to power, agreed to her proposal;

her government was therefore proclaimed by the states assembled at Orlèans.

The last obstacle to the Queen-Regent's peaceable enjoyment of her power was the Duke de Guise, who was assassinated at Orleans, by Poltrot, in 1563. Catherine, on learning the news, shed tears of joy. She at once dismissed the virtuous l'Hôpital, whose probity was a restraint to her; and, unscrupulous as to the means she employed to gratify her taste for governing, continued to foment divisions between those whose attachment she doubted, and by weakening the state secured her own tranquillity; on the other hand, she loaded her partisans with favours, and augmented their numbers daily.

Although forty-three years of age, she still possessed great beauty, of which it is asserted that she made political use, having accorded her smiles to the Vidame of Chartres, the Cardinal of Lorraine, the Duke de Nemours, the Duke de Guise, the Prince de Condé, and even to a private gentleman of Brittany named Troile de Mesquez.

She also attracted all the nobility to the Court by the various diversions that she invented; her maids of honour, the number of whom exceeded two hundred, performed in ballets and theatricals which she composed, and Catherine did not hesitate to make use of their attractions also to serve her political purposes; she corrupted her Court and her own children, not even excepting Marguerite de Valois, whom she frequently conducted to the Place de Grève in Paris to witness the executions.

Catherine was, however, very industrious: a follower of

the school of Alexander VI. and the Borgias, she diligently studied Machiavelism, incessantly corresponded in French and Italian, and added lustre to her diadem by the discerning and generous patronage she bestowed on artists, who have acknowledged their debt of gratitude to her in the eulogies they have handed down to posterity.

Although gifted with an intellectual mind, Catherine, who had no religious faith, believed in ghosts and spirits; she always wore upon her bosom the skin of an infant whose throat had been cut; this amulet was covered with mysterious characters of different colours, and she was persuaded that it possessed the virtue of preserving her from all injury. She brought divinators and astrologers with her from Italy, amongst whom was the celebrated Cosmo Ruggieri.

To these faults and weaknesses Catherine joined some great qualities; she intrepidly assisted at the seige of Rouen, in 1562, by encouraging the soldiers in the midst of the fight, heedless of the balls and bullets which flew around her: she afterwards took possession of Havre de Grace, which was occupied by the English, and made a negotiation with Elizabeth of England, by which that powerful Queen evacuated the coasts of Normandy, which had been ceded to her by the Protestants during the civil war. At this time all Europe was governed by women: England, by Elizabeth; Scotland, by Mary Stuart; Portugal, by the Infanta, daughter of Eleanor; Navarre, by Queen Jane; the Low Countries, by the natural daughter of Charles V.; Spain, by Isabella of France; and France, by Catherine de' Medici.

The most sanguinary page in the annals of France is

offered to the memory in the massacres of Saint Bartholomew, which took place on the 24th of August, 1572, and were resolved on and arranged in the Tuileries by Catherine and the Dukes of Anjou, Nevers, and Angoulême. Admiral Coligny was to be the first victim, and the general massacre was to follow. All was determined with a frightful secrecy; the barriers of Paris were locked and guarded, and the signal was the clock of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois. Sad and anxious, Charles IX. waited in secret horror for the hour of the massacre. His mother, fearing his irresolution, passed the night beside him, reassured him, and prevented him from countermanding his order; to hasten the performance of which, she caused the tocsin to be sounded before the arrival of the hour.

After this period the Queen-mother plunged into every species of depravity, infected France with all the vices of Italy, and favoured and encouraged the disorderly conduct of her sons, in order to deprive them of the energy requisite for governing. She instituted, among other diversions, battles between beasts, and accompanied her children to witness the tortures and executions of the condemned; after which she gave them feasts in which her maids of honour, crowned with flowers and habited as goddesses, served the young Princes at table.

Charles IX.'s disposition, after the massacres of Saint Bartholomew, became sad and melancholy; he was constantly filled with terror; and, struck with a mortal malady in the flower of his age, he experienced but indifference and neglect from most of his relations. He believed himself

to be surrounded with spectres, had frightful dreams, in which his terrified imagination beheld rivers of blood and heaps of ghastly corpses, and fancied that the air was constantly filled with doleful sounds and plaintive accents. When dying, Charles IX. repulsed his mother with horror, and fell into convulsions whenever she attempted to approach him.

The Queen-mother experienced little grief at the loss of this son, having always a preference for the Duke of Anjou; some chronicles state that Louis XIII. often repeated that Charles IX. was poisoned by Catherine de' Medici. This Queen saw with pleasure the continuation of her authority, until Henry III., who was elected King of Poland, in 1573, returned to France and assumed the reins of government, in 1574. But this Prince was no longer the valiant conqueror of Jarnac and Montcontour, having grown indolent, and his ambitious mother encouraged this disposition.

In 1575, Henry III. married Louise de Lorraine, niece to the Duc de Guise; and Catherine, fearing that the young Queen's uncle would obtain too much influence over the King, created a division between the royal pair. Accordingly, the indignant Protestants again revolted; but the Queen-mother arrested the King of Navarre and the Marshals Montmorenci and de Cossé, who headed them, but the King rendered them their liberty in 1576, and granted them places of security. Catherine consoled herself by prevailing on the Pope to excommunicate the King of Navarre in 1585.

The Queen's astrologers had foretold that her four sons would be Kings, and she made every effort to procure a for-

eign crown for the fourth, who was Duc d'Alençon, for she loved Henry III. too much to wish that the fourth Prince should succeed to the throne through his death. She therefore despatched Monsieur de Noailles to obtain the Regency of Algiers for him from the Sultan, Selim II., with the view of composing a kingdom for that Prince by the addition of the island of Sardinia. This ambitious woman also despatched a fleet in 1580 to maintain her pretensions to the Crown of Portugal, but in that enterprise she failed.

The formation of the League in 1585 augmented her power, but threw France into the most terrible disorder; the Duc de Guise placed himself at the head of the revolt, and plunged the nation into an abyss of trouble, which the accession of Henry the Great alone put an end to.

After the celebrated "day of barricades," in 1588, the King, who was defeated by the League and obliged to quit Paris, at length discerned the source of all the evil; he, therefore, forbid his mother's appearance in the Council, and loaded her with bitter reproaches. The rage to which Catherine gave vent in consequence brought on a violent fever, of which she died at Blois, in 1589, aged seventy years. This Queen deservedly carried to the tomb the execration of the people.

Her children were—besides Francis II., Charles IX., and Henry III.—Louis, Victoria, and Jane, who died in their infancy; Francis, Duke d'Alençon and Brabant; Elizabeth, wife of Philip II., King of Spain; Claude, married to Charles II., Duc de Lorraine; and Margaret de Valois, first wife of Henry the Great.

Châteaubriand, in his remarks on this Queen, says: "Catherine was an Italian, and educated in a republican principality; she was accustomed to popular storms, factions, intrigues, secret poisonings, and midnight murders; she had no aristocratic and monarchical prejudices—that haughtiness towards the great and contempt for the little, those pretensions to divine right and monopoly of absolute power; she was unacquainted with our laws, and had little respect for them; for she attempted to place the crown of France upon the head of her daughter. Like the Italians of her time, she was superstitious, but incredulous in her religious opinions and in her unbelief; had no real aversion to the Protestants, but sacrificed them for political reasons. In fact, if we trace all her actions, we shall perceive that she looked upon this vast kingdom, of which she was the sovereign, as an enlarged Florence; and considered the riots of her little republic, the quarrels of the Pozzi and the Medicis, as the struggles of the Guises and Chatillons."

As the mother of kings, the guardian of her children, and the Regent of the kingdom, Catherine's character is a problem difficult to solve. She was more circumspect than enterprising, and supplied the want of a vigorous chief by the craftiness and cunning of her sex and country; she neither did wrong for the pleasure of committing evil, nor good from a natural principle of virtue, for her merits and vices depended mostly on moments and circumstances. In reflecting on the annals of empires, how frequently the destinies of thousands depend upon the lightest incidents! At the insurrection of Florence, in 1528, Catherine de' Medici several times nar-

rowly escaped death. The rebels, having seized her, conveyed her to a convent: one of them proposed to suspend her from the walls, exposed to the fire of the artillery, and another wished to give her up to the brutality of the soldiers; but she escaped all these dangers, in order to burden France with trouble for the space of fifty-six years!

Nevertheless, her love for the arts does her honour. Besides the Tuileries and the Hôtel de Soissons which she built at Paris, she erected the beautiful Château de Chenonceaux in Touraine; she also enriched the Royal Library of Paris with a great number of Greek and Latin manuscripts, and with a portion of the books which her great-grandfather, Laurent de' Medici, purchased from the Turks after the taking of Constantinople.

CATERINA CORNARO.

CATERINA CORNARO, QUEEN OF CYPRUS

(1454—1510)

DEZOS DE LA ROQUETTE

LUSIGNANA-CATERINA, or Catherine, Queen of Cyprus, born in Venice, in 1454, was the daughter of Marco Cornaro, a noble Venetian, a descendant of the Doge of the same name, and Florence, daughter of Niccolo Crispo, Duca dell' Archipelago. At an early age, she was sent to the convent of San Benedetto in Padoua; here she was educated and remained until 1469. At this period, Jacques II. de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, Jerusalem and Armenia, the natural son of King Jean III. and Maria Patrasso, a Cypriote lady, had reigned for several years without opposition. After having abdicated from the Archbishopric of Nicosia, and retired from ecclesiastical life, supported by the Soldan of Alexandria, he had succeeded in forcing his sister, Charlotte, legitimate daughter and heir to the throne of Jean III., and wife of the Count of Geneva, to withdraw into Savoy.

Having had, according to the authors of the *Dictionnaire historique de Bassano,* to choose a wife from among sixty-two of the most beautiful women of Venice, Jacques II. offered his crown and his hand to Caterina Cornaro; he

offered himself either because he was in love with her,* or, according to some historians, in recognition of the services that her uncle, Andrea Cornaro, had rendered him. This marriage was brought about by the intervention of Antonio Zucchi, a native of Udine and Bishop of Nicosia, and Philip Podacataro, royal orator (*regio oratore*) of Venice. The Senate adopted Caterina Cornaro as a daughter of the Republic, gave her a dowry of a hundred thousand golden ducats, and agreed to defend the King and Kingdom of Cyprus against all enemies.

The solemn nuptials were celebrated in Venice; the Doge himself, Cristoforo Moro, called for the bride at her house in the Bucentaur, gave her her title, and accompanied her to the shore, where she embarked on a Venetian galley, commanded by Girolamo Diedo, and a perfectly regal suite, among whom were the ambassadors of King Jacques; she was also accompanied and attended by Andrea Bragadino, whom the Republic had appointed her husband by proxy.

Caterina left in 1472 for Famagosta, the capital of Cyprus, and, after having experienced several accidents on the sea, arrived at her destination. Welcomed by the most enthusiastic demonstrations from the kingdom, which admired her rare beauty and her charming manners, she was crowned

* M. Daru tells the story differently. According to him, Andrea Cornaro, a Venetian patrician, banished from his country on account of his youthful adventures, formed a connection with Jacques; as if by accident, he allowed him to see the portrait of his niece, the sight of which inflamed this prince, who was then Archbishop of Nicosia and decided him to renounce ecclesiastical orders; and, at a later period, when he became King, he married Caterina Cornaro.

Queen with the most brilliant festivities. A year and a half had scarcely elapsed after this marriage, when Jacques II., whose government did not give satisfaction to his subjects, died on June 5, 1473, the victim of a conspiracy. His first son by Caterina had already died before him; but he left her expecting a second child that was under the protection of her uncle, Andrea Cornaro, and the Republic of Venice.

The protection that the Venetians had accorded to the Kingdom of Cyprus had never been disinterested; but their cupidity and ambition manifested themselves more openly after the death of Jacques II. His posthumous child, who had been proclaimed King on his birth, dying in 1475, Caterina worked ardently for her rights, and with the aid of the Venetians she succeeded in vanquishing the partisans that her sister-in-law, Charlotte, had kept in the island, and in maintaining possession of her kingdom.*

For nearly fourteen years Caterina remained in the island of Cyprus, subjected by the Venetians to the most severe surveillance, kept by them, so to speak, a prisoner in her palace, and deprived, little by little, of all authority.

Avenging by frequent punishments the conspiracies of the nobles, sometimes for the sake of Charlotte and sometimes for the sake of Caterina, they first compelled the former to leave Cyprus and wearied the latter so by the incessant restrictions they laid upon her liberty, that, towards the end of 1489, she allowed herself to be persuaded to abandon the island

* On the 28th of July, 1482, Charlotte ceded her rights to Charles I., Duke of Savoy and his successors in that Duchy, and retired to Rome, where she died on the 16th of July, 1487. The Venetians had made vain efforts to get her to put herself in their hands.

with Giorgio Cornaro, her beloved brother, and to retire to Venice. This occurred in 1489, and on the 26th of February, yielding to the entreaties of her brother, threatened, Sismondi assures us, to forfeit his head on account of the failure in carrying out the orders of Signory, she made a solemn transfer of her kingdom and all her pretensions to the Doge in the Basilica of St. Mark.*

The Senate invested the Cornaro family with fourteen villages (*casali*), of the island, and, in the course of several years, with the title of commandery, permitting the descendants of that illustrious house to use the Lusignan arms.

Having repaired to Frattalonga, situated at the foot of the Asolani mountains in the Trevisan marshes, to meet the Emperor Maximilian, who was returning to Vienna by way of Milan, this place pleased her so much that on the 21st of June she demanded of and obtained from the Doge, Augostino Barbarigo, the investiture of Asolo and its district with ten livres of gold a year. She returned in the following month of October to this place, which had been ceded to her, accompanied by more than four thousand persons, and established a court in the castle, where she lived about twenty-one years with a suite of twenty-four persons and a body of

* Sismondi supposes that this transfer was made in the island of Cyprus to Franco Priuli, general of the Republic. Count Daru seems to share this opinion, for he says that Caterina was forced to abdicate in favour of the Venetians in 1488; that the Republic took possession of the Kingdom of Cyprus on the 26th of February, 1489, and that on the following 14th of May she embarked for Venice. We have followed the account given by the authors of the *Dictionnaire historique de Bassano.*

regular troops furnished her by the Republic for her defence, or else as a guarantee of her conduct.

In this beautiful residence, Caterina Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus, held three courts at the same time,—that of the Muses; that of Love; and her own, which was of a truly regal magnificence. Bembo was the soul and ornament of all three. The delightful abode at Asolo, where love and pleasure reigned, was visited by the most illustrious personages of Italy, who were entertained by Caterina with fabulous splendour. The celebrated poet, Pietro Bembo, her relative, who afterwards became Cardinal, but who was very young at this time, rarely ever left it: and it was for the magnificent marriage festivities of one of her maids of honour that he wrote *Gli Asolani* * in 1490. She built at Asolono (afterwards known as St. Catherine), at her own expense, a new church dedicated to her saint, and erected other monuments that show her piety and generosity.

During the wars occasioned by the League of Cambray, she thought it best for the sake of security to retire to Venice, where she died on July 5, 1510, at the age of fifty-six years, in the palace of her brother Giorgio, who was then procurator of St. Mark's.

After a magnificent funeral, her body was first placed in the Church of the Santi Apostoli, and afterwards in that of S. Salvatore, and a simple inscription was engraven on her tomb.

* These are dialogues on the nature of love, supposed to be held by six young persons of both sexes.

ANNE MARIE LOUISE D'ORLÉANS, DUCHESSE DE MONTPENSIER

(1627—1693)

CHARLES DUKE YONGE

THE PRINCESSE ANNE MARIE LOUISE D'ORLÉANS, Duchesse de Montpensier, but better known as Mademoiselle, and not unfrequently spoken of as *La Grande Mademoiselle,* was of the most royal birth in France, being the only legitimate granddaughter of Henry IV., and the wealthiest heiress in Europe, succeeding as she did, even in the lifetime of her father, Gaston, Duke of Orleans, to the vast possessions of her mother, the representative of the house of Montpensier. As such, the arrangement of a marriage for her might naturally have been expected to have been among the first objects of solicitude, not only to the relatives who could guide the disposal of her hand, but still more to those who might hope to obtain it; and never has so varied and royal a list of candidates been offered to any lady's acceptance. An emperor, three kings, and kings' brothers, and cousins almost without number, had their pretensions to her favour successively discussed; but, chiefly through her own caprice or indifference, all the great matches which were proposed for her came to nothing. Though for a moment she favoured one or two of the suggested connec-

LA GRANDE MADEMOISELLE.

tions, she admits frankly that in those instances she was attracted by the position of her intended husband rather than by himself; and the first person who ever awakened her serious liking was no prince of any nation, but only a younger brother of a noble family, that of Lazun, whom she eventually married. Even apart from her rank and wealth, her personal charms were sufficient to attract suitors enough, if her own description of them may be believed:

"I am tall, neither fat nor thin; of a very fine and graceful figure. My neck is tolerably shaped; my arms and hands are not good; but my skin is fair. My legs are straight; my feet are well-formed; my hair light, or a pretty ash-colour. My face is long, its contour pretty; my nose is large and aquiline; my mouth is neither large nor small, but symmetrical, and with a very agreeable expression. My lips are rosy; my teeth not good, but not very bad; my eyes blue, neither large nor small, but bright, soft, and commanding, like my countenance. I have a lofty manner without being conceited. I am civil and familiar; but in a way rather to gain respect than to allow any one to fail in it. I am very indifferent about my dress, but never untidy; I hate slovenliness. I am always neat, and, whether dressed carefully or carelessly, all I put on is in good taste. I do not mean that I do not look incomparably better when carefully got up; but carelessness is less injurious to me than to others, because without flattering myself, while I do justice to all I wear, everything I put on becomes me. I talk a great deal without talking nonsense or using bad expressions, and I never speak of what I do not understand."

This high-born, wealthy, showy-looking, clever, capricious, warm-hearted, cool-headed, haughty, affable, imperious, friendly, wayward, mirth-loving damsel was but little more than sixteen, when the whole aspect of the Court in which she moved was changed by the death of that most unamiable of sovereigns, Louis XIII., and the transference of authority to the hands of his widow, the gracious and popular Anne of Austria. As if by the touch of an enchanter, gloom and moroseness were in a moment exchanged for sunshine and good-humour, and the Princess enjoyed the transformation as much as any one; giving herself up eagerly to the excitement of pleasures suitable to her age, and by no means impatient to surrender her liberty to a master in the shape of a husband.

At first, indeed, she and her father adhered to the Court and accompanied the King and Queen in their second flight from Paris. The Queen's surprise at her promptitude in joining the flight had been caused by a belief that her father, d'Orléans, was in reality meditating a change of sides and a union with the rebels. The prospect seemed to Mazarin so fraught with danger to himself that he spared no pains to prevent it; and in spite of the Queen-mother's known desire for a different connection for her son, sent a messenger to Mademoiselle to implore her intervention. He probably judged rightly in believing that her resolute character had sufficient ascendency over her father to insure his adoption of any cause which she should insist on; and the bait which he not unreasonably expected to prevail with her was the offer of immediate marriage with the young King, who was on the

point of attaining his legal majority, which for French sovereigns was fixed at their thirteenth birthday. In reality she had already begun to contemplate the marriage thus tendered to her as the first object of her ambition; yet she received the message with a coldness which was little short of disdain. She and her father must keep the engagements into which they had entered with Condé.

Condé soon declared himself in open rebellion; and nothing was of greater moment to his success than the adhesion of the great city of Orléans, where her father naturally had more influence than anywhere else. But he, as faithless in his treason as in his loyal moments, could not, when the hour of action came, resolve to do anything at all. There was not an instant to lose, for the King, who was on the Loire with a small army under command of Turenne, had sent to demand admittance into Orléans. The citizens of Orléans looked on themselves almost as much bound and more inclined to obey the Duke than the King; and in the perplexity into which the royal summons threw them, they applied to him for directions as to their conduct. He was as incapable of directing as of acting; but in his helplessness he did what was better, or at least more efficacious than either—he took to his bed and whistled, and sent his daughter to Orléans to act on her own judgment.

No commission could have been more suited to her present fancy. She wanted excitement; she wanted to punish Mazarin for not marrying her to the King without any conditions. She nominated a staff of female aides-de-camp, and with them quitted Paris without delay. On her way, she

fell in with the Dukes of Beaufort and Nemours, who, though also recognised as princes of the blood, were also in rebellion. She took them, and some troops which they had with them, under her orders, and showed that she was determined to exercise a real authority by establishing and resolutely maintaining the strictest military discipline, from which she would not exempt even the dukes themselves. They and her staff of five ladies gave her the most trouble; they meant to play at rebellion, she was thoroughly in earnest; and she was no *reine fainéante* to suffer her commands to be disputed or neglected. She shamed the dukes into punctuality by marching without them when they failed to present themselves at the proper time. Some of the ladies, who murmured and even swore at the hardship she imposed upon them, she reproached as poltroons, and sent them back to Paris. She presided at councils of war; and allowed it to be seen that she would have no objection to preside at a court-martial. When she reached Orléans and found the citizens too much alarmed to admit her, though they offered as a compromise to refuse also to admit the King himself, she engaged a crowd of bargemen to break down a passage for her at a spot in the city-walls where an old gate which opened on the river had been blocked up. When a breach had been made, they ferried her across the water, two of them took her up in their arms and carried her over the mud, and then, seating her on a chair, they bore her on their shoulders in triumph into the city, the drums beating, and the people shouting "Long live the King and the Princes, but down with Mazarin!"

She was now as absolutely mistress of the city as Joan of Arc had been. The magistrates formally resigned their authority into her hands; and she was as ready to govern a town as to command an army. She summoned the municipal officers and principal citizens to the town hall, and made them a speech; introduced a sufficient body of troops to garrison the place; allotted them their duties with military precision; and in a few hours put the city in such a state of defence, and excited so unanimous an enthusiasm in all classes, that, when the King's army arrived, its commanders could see no probability of attacking it with success. She was uncertain whether to feel disappointed or not at their resolution to retire. On the one hand she would have liked nothing better than to make one more trial of her military skill, by leading her troops into actual battle; but on the other she had changed her mind about the King himself; perhaps because she had just before let him slip. She now again was inclined to marry him, and she was not sure that an action might not have deranged her plans; so she wrote to the Queen that, if a lasting peace were desired, the best way would be to give her Louis for a husband. Anne preferred withdrawing her army, and Mademoiselle sent hers to pursue it. When they were gone, she remained behind in Orléans, where, though half her time was taken up in laughing over her late exploit, dancing, and revelling, the other half was spent in making sensible and humane arrangements to repair the injuries which the lower classes had suffered from the interruption of trade caused by the recent danger.

Condé's connection with Spain had so weakened his

influence, even among the Parisians, that he became violent and desperate, and at last ventured on a pitched battle with the royal army under Turenne, though Louis himself was in the Marshal's camp; and as the presence of the King was universally reckoned to make resistance more heinous. In spite of his personal heroism, which he never displayed more brilliantly, it was evident that he must soon be overpowered by Turenne's superior numbers, under the direction of superior skill; and as a last hope, he sent messengers to d'Orléans, who was at the Luxembourg, to implore his aid. The Duke, always a coward both politically and personally, was more terrified and irresolute than ever. He professed to be too ill even to go to the walls and see what was going on. All that his daughter could extract from him was an order in his capacity of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, to the municipal authorities to arm the militia, and to allow Condé's baggage admission into the city. The magistrates, who had just received orders of an exactly contrary tenor from the King, hesitated to obey those of his brother in preference. She scolded and threatened till she made them not only submit, but agree to place the militia under her own command; and then, thus invested with actual military authority, she ordered the gates to be opened to the Prince's baggage; took up her own station on the ramparts of the Bastille, and having ordered the guns to be loaded, calmly surveyed the field of battle with her opera-glass, and waited for the moment of more decisive action. It was not long coming: at first the Prince had but 5,000 men to Turenne's 12,000, and the result of so unequal a contest had only been

delayed, it could not be averted, by his own marvellous energy and desperate valour. His enemies affirmed that he must be a devil, for that no man could do all he did on that day; and now the odds were growing too vast for even him to contend against, for Turenne's artillery had reached the field, and was beginning to play with deadly effect on his thinned ranks. He was reduced at last to accept Mademoiselle's offer, which he had before refused, of leave to withdraw his whole army into the city; and, as his men filed in through the gates, she protected their retreat by opening a heavy fire on the royal troops which were pressing upon them. Such conduct savoured more of resolution than of policy. Mazarin, in allusion to her recent proposal to marry the King, remarked that she "had shot down her husband." And he spoke truly.

We have said that Mademoiselle de Montpensier herself was not insensible to the attractions of honourable love. After the failure of her projects with regard to Louis, he himself offered her his brother, the Duke of Orléans, the very evening of the death of his first duchess,* whom Louis himself did not doubt that he had poisoned.

She had recently become attached to a young officer of noble birth, the Marquis of Puyguilhem, so much more known by the title he subsequently acquired of Count de Lauzun, that we shall only speak of him by that name. His appearance in some respect belied his character, for he was small in stature, and of a fairness of complexion which amounted to effeminacy. But France did not contain a

* See pages 282-286.

prouder, bolder, or more resolute spirit; which more than once led him to brave Louis himself, conduct which heroes the most intrepid on the field of battle did not dare to imitate.

Of the courtship she has left us the most minute details. As no one out of the royal family could venture to raise his eyes to one within that august circle, she was the courter; and it was she herself who, when she had overcome his scruples, or, it would be more proper to say, removed his doubts as to the possibility of carrying out her plans, undertook to procure the consent of the King. Finally he gave his consent. To raise her intended husband to a rank nearer her own, she conferred on him several of her own estates, the duchy of Montpensier, and Dombes, over which she exercised a kind of sovereignty, being among them; and the marriage might have taken place if Laugun himself, by the time he wasted in making the most magnificent preparations for his wedding, had not given some of his enemies leisure to work on the King's mind and to induce him to retract his permission. Mademoiselle was in despair; she begged Louis rather to put her to death; but he was now firm or obstinate, though professing the highest opinion of Lauzun, and admitting that the Princess could not have a more able or honest friend, nor a more faithful adviser; and proposing to salve over the disappointment to the lover himself by making him a Duke and Marshal of France. Lauzun declined such consolation. He would not allow his views to bear the appearance of having been dictated by interest; and he not only pressed Mademoiselle to take back the duchies which

she had given him, but tried to reconcile her to the King's decision, and even proposed to go himself as ambassador to England to negotiate a marriage between her and the Duke of York. Of this she would not hear, and, though it is impossible to say when it took place, it seems certain that she resolved on the King's pleasure, and that they were privately married. It is not impossible that it may have been the knowledge of this fact that in the winter of 1671 caused Lauzun's arrest and confinement at Pignerol, though Saint-Simon attributes this to the continued machinations of Louvois and Madame de Montespan. His imprisonment lasted many years, the Princess in vain exerting all her influence to procure his liberation; till at last, Louis, to his eternal dishonour, conceived the idea of making a profit of her distress, and released her lover, or her husband, on condition of her settling the reversion of her most valuable estates on the most unworthy of his illegimitate children, the Duc du Maine.

But though separation did not weaken their affection, reunion did. A courtier of the school in which he was brought up could not refrain from showing attentions to more ladies than one; Mademoiselle conceived, not unreasonably, that she had at all events earned a monopoly of his. She was jealous, and showed her jealousy; one evening she scratched his face before a large company, and he had to pursue her on his knees, clinging to her skirts, the whole length of a gallery before he could obtain a temporary forgiveness. At last the quarrels became so frequent that for peace's sake he retired to England, where, some years after-

wards, the reign of the Stuart dynasty gave him the opportunity of recovering the favour of his own sovereign, by conducting Mary of Modena and the infant Prince of Wales in safety to France. It did not, however, regain for him the affections of his wife. She refused to see him, and when, a year or two afterwards, she died of a lingering disease, she left all her possessions of which she had not previously disposed, not to him, but to the young Duc d'Orléans.

THE END

847-6
61T

5785-2
60T

RET'D SEP 14 1987
APR 10 1992

CT3202.S45
Famous women as described by famous writ
3 0629 0116965 6

CT
3202
S45

BOUND BY